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ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

IN

SOUTHERN INDIA.





# ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

IN

SOUTHERN INDIA

With 40 Plates.

58795

BY

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PART II



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## PREFACE.

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IT has been well said that "there will be plenty of money and people available for anthropological research, when there are no more aborigines. And it behoves our museums to waste no time in completing their anthropological collections." Under the scheme for a systematic ethnographic survey of the whole of India, a superintendent for each Presidency and Province was appointed in 1901, to carry out the work of the survey in addition to his other duties. The other duty, in my particular case—the direction of a large local museum—luckily makes an excellent blend with the survey operations, as the work of collection for the ethnological section goes on synchronously with that of investigation.

For many years I have been engaged in bringing together the scattered information bearing on 'Manners and Customs' in South India, surviving, moribund, or deceased, which lies buried in official reports, manuals, journals of societies, and other publications. The information thus collected has been supplemented by correspondence with district officers and private individuals, and by the personal wanderings of myself and my assistants, Mr. K. Rangachari (from whose negatives most of the illustrations have been made), Mr. V. Govindan and Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao, in various parts of the Madras Presidency, Mysore, and Travancore, in connection with the work of the survey, which demands the writing of a book on lines similar to Risley's 'Tribes and Castes of

Bengal.' For the issue of this book the time is not yet ripe, and, as an *ad interim* measure, I send forth the present farrago in the hope that it may be of some little use and interest to those who are engaged in the study of ethnological and sociological questions in the arm-chair or the field. For such, rather than for the general public, it is intended.

To the many friends and correspondents, European and Native, who have helped me in the accumulation of facts, or whose published writings I have made liberal use of, I would express collectively, and with all sincerity, my great sense of indebtedness. And I would further express a hope that readers will draw my attention to the errors, such as must inevitably arise when one is dealing with a mass of evidence derived from a variety of sources, and provide me with material for a possible future edition.

“Let those now send who never sent before;

And those who have sent, kindly send me more.”

Some of the articles, originally published in my Museum Bulletins, are now reproduced with additions.

I may add that the chapter devoted to omens, evil eye, etc., is intended only as a mere outline sketch of a group of subjects, which, if worked up in detail, would furnish material for a very bulky volume.

E. T

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ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

IN

SOUTHERN INDIA.

Part II



## DEFORMITY AND MUTILATION.

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IN his little book \* on fashions in deformity, or alteration of some part of the body from its natural form, Sir W. Flower says that "some of them have been associated with religious or superstitious observances; some have been vaguely thought to be hygienic in motive; most have some relation to conventional standards of improved personal appearance." As simple examples of the last in Southern India may be incidentally noted the beauty spots daubed on the foreheads of villagers on the occasion of a festival with sandal-paste or bright anilin powders, or with the purple juice of the fruit of *Eugenia Arnottiana* by the Toda women of the Nilgiris. Among some classes, the females cut-discs out of the shining green elytra of a buprestid beetle, and stick them on their foreheads as beauty marks instead of the more usual kunkam (turmeric, or starch coloured with anilin dyes) or santhu (black paste made of charred rāgi or other millet). The use of black antimony (surma) or lamp black as a cosmetic for the eyelids, and improving the complexion by smearing the face with turmeric, are very widespread among females. So, too, among Muhammadan men, is dyeing the nails and hair red with henna leaves (*Lawsonia alba*).

Thinking that it will give their husbands increase of years, women freely bathe themselves in turmeric water,

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\* Fashion in Deformity (Nature series), 1881.

which is matchless in beneficial effects. The use of water in which turmeric has been infused, by which they give to the whole body a bright yellow or gold colour, is prescribed to wives as a mark of the conjugal state, and forbidden to widows.\* Some Canarese women (Vakkaliga, Kuruba, Holeya, etc.), like the Malays; consider blackened teeth to be more beautiful than white. The staining process is carried out before puberty is reached. The girl, whose teeth are to be coloured, softens the gums, and removes the tartar, by sucking lime-juice. The paste, which consists of a mixture of myrabolams (fruit of *Terminalia*), sulphate of iron, cutch, pods of *Acacia arabica*, and areca nut, is then applied. Its application is said to produce intense pain, and the girl may have to lie low for several days. Sometimes women of the higher classes stain their teeth in the same manner, when they get loose, or when they suffer from tooth-ache. The wearing of heavy brass armlets sometimes gives rise to extensive sores and cicatrices. Boring the nostrils and helix of the ear for the insertion of precious jewels set in gold, brass and bead ornaments, simple brass rings, and hoops or pieces of stick like matches, is widely resorted to. The cartilage of the ear of a Khond girl is pierced, and, until she is officially married, she wears in the holes long pieces of grass. After marriage, brass rings are substituted. In Coorg the carpenter has the exclusive privilege of piercing the ears for ornaments. At the ceremony of investiture of

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\* Ellis, Kural.

a Mysore Holeya with the musical instrument which is the badge of priestly rank in his caste, the officiating Bairāgi bores a hole in his right ear with a needle, and from the punctured wound two drops of blood fall on the ground.

The custom of calling a newly-born child, after the parent has lost a first born or more in succession, by an opprobrious name is common amongst many castes in Southern India, including even Muhammadans. Kuppuswāmi (= Sir dungheap) is one of the commonest names for such children, and they have the distinguishing mark of a pierced nostril and ear (on the right side) with a knob of gold in it.\* Sometimes a woman, who has lost a child, when she is again pregnant, makes a vow that the child, when born, shall be named after the god or goddess (Srinivāsa or Alamēlu) at Tirupati. The infant is accordingly taken to the Tirupati temple, where its hair is removed, and the lobe of the ear pierced. Some of the members of the Kiriattil clan of Nāyars, who call themselves Padināyirattil (one of ten thousand) pierce the ears, but never wear earrings.† A Nāyar was noticed by Mr. Fawcett, whose right nostril was slit vertically, as if for the insertion of a jewel. His mother had miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. In the Mysore province, the custom of boring the right side of the nostrils of children, whose elder brother or sister died

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\* B.R.B. Ind. Ant., IX, 1880.

† F. Fawcett, Madras Mus. Bull, III, 1901.

soon after their birth, prevails. Such children are called gunda (rock), kalla (stone), hucha (lunatic), tippa (dung-hill). The last name is given after some rubbish from a dung-hill has been brought in a sieve, and the child placed in it.\*

Mutilation as a means of "improving" personal appearance reaches its highest point in dilatation of the lobes of the ears, which, it has been suggested, was originally adopted in India for the purpose of receiving a solar disc. For the following note I am indebted to Canon A. Margöschis, of the S.P.G. Mission, Tinnevely, who is a practical authority on the subject. "To produce this artificial deformity," he writes, "is the work of men of the Koravar caste, whose occupations are bird-catching and basket-making. On or about the third day after birth, the troubles of a female begin, for the child's ears must be operated on, and for this purpose a knife with a triangular blade is used. Sometimes the ceremony is postponed until the child is sixteen days old. Among the Hindus a 'good day' is selected, and Christians choose Sunday. The point of the knife is run through the lobe of the ear until the blade has penetrated for half an inch of its length. Both ears are cut, and a piece of cotton-wool is placed in the wounds, to keep the cut portions dilated. Every other day the Koravar must change the wool, and increase the quantity introduced. If the sores fester, a dressing is used of castor-oil and human milk in equal parts, and, if there is much suppuration, an astringent, such as tamarind juice

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\* Narayan Aiyangar, Ind. Ant. IX, 1880.

lotion, is used. The cut lobes will take not less than a month to heal, and for the whole of that time the process of dilatation is continued by passing through the lobes pledgets of cotton-wool, increasing gradually in size. After the wounds have healed, pieces of cotton cloth are rolled up (plate XXV), and placed in the lobes instead of the cotton-wool; and this is done for a few days only, when leaden rings are substituted, which are added to in number until as many as six or eight rings are in each ear. These drag the lobes down more and more, and, by the time the infant is a year old, the process of elongating the lobes is complete in so far as the acute stage is concerned, and all that is necessary afterwards is to leave the leaden rings in the ears, and to let the elongated lobes grow as the child grows. Instead of keeping a large number of rings in the ears, they are melted down into two heavy, thick rings, which are kept in the ears until the girl is twelve or thirteen years old, and by that time the acme of beauty will have been attained so far as the ears are concerned, because the lobes will reach down to the shoulders on each side. This is perfection, and reminds one of the man on one of the islands near New Guinea, the lobes of whose ears had been converted into great pendent rings of skin, through which it was possible to pass the arms.\* The fees for the operation are 10 annas to Rs. 1-1-6. The custom described prevails among the following castes: Vellâlas, Shânars, Maravans, Paravans, shepherds, dyers, tailors, oilmongers, Pallas, and Pariahs. The females of the

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\* Flower, *Op cit.*

Plate XXV.



Dilated Ear-lobes.



Paravar caste (Roman Catholic fisher caste) are famous for the longest ears, and for wearing the heaviest and most expensive golden ear jewels made of sovereigns. Ordinary ear jewels cost Rs. 200, but heavy jewels are worth Rs. 1,000 and even more. The longer the ears, the more jewels can be used, and this appears to be the rationale of elongated ears. In former days men also had long ears, but it is now reserved for the men who play the bow and bells at demon dances. With regard to the prevalence of this custom of mangling the human body, and the possibility of its gradual removal, the missionaries, especially in Tinnevely, have all along been the sternest foes of the barbarity. In one boarding school alone, consisting of 224 girls, there are 165 with short ears, so that only 59 have them elongated. And, of the 165, no less than 51 have had their long ears operated on and cut short at the mission hospital, and this they have consented to as a voluntary act. As it was once the fashion to have long ears, and a mark of respectability, so now the converse is true. Until the last twenty years, if a woman had short ears, she was asked if she was a dancing girl (*dēva-dāsi*) because that class kept their ears natural. Now, with the change of customs all round, even dancing girls are found with long ears. Muhammadan women have their ears pierced all round the outer edges, and as many as twenty or twenty-five rings, of iron or gold, are inserted in the holes; but the lobes are not elongated. The artificial deforming of the body assumes various phases in different parts of the world, and we have but to refer to the small feet of the



Chinese, the flattening of the skull of infants among the North American Indians, and the piercing and elongation of the upper lip amongst certain tribes in Central Africa. In all cases these are attempts to improve upon nature, and the results are as revolting as they are often ghastly and cruel. The torture inflicted upon helpless Tamil babes is so cruel that it would be humane and righteous for Government to interfere, and abolish long ears. The number of persons suffering from deafness and chronic discharges from the ear is very considerably increased in consequence of the barbarity described above."

In connection with the practice of dilating the lobes of the ears among the Kallans of the Madura district, Mr. J. H. Nelson writes \* that "both males and females are accustomed to stretch to the utmost possible limit the lobes of their ears. The unpleasant disfigurement is effected by the mother boring the ears of her baby, and inserting heavy pieces of metal, generally lead, into the apertures. The effect so produced is very wonderful, and it is not at all uncommon to see the ears of a Kallan hanging on his shoulders. When violently angry, a Kallan will sometimes tear in two the attenuated strips of flesh, which constitute his ears, expecting thereby to compel his adversary to do likewise as a sort of an *amende honorable*: and altercations between women constantly lead to one or both parties having the ears violently pulled asunder. And formerly, where a Kalla girl was deputed, as frequently happened, to guide a stranger in safety through a Kalla tract, if any of her caste-people

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\* Manual of the Madura district.

attempted to offer violence to her charge in spite of her protestations, she would immediately tear open one of her ears, and run off at full speed to her home to complain of what had been done. And the result of her complaint was invariably a sentence to the effect that the culprits should have both their ears torn in expiation of their breach of the by-laws of the forest."

The following rules, which were formerly drawn up by Kallans, under compulsion by their servants, are distinctly quaint.

(1) If a Kallan lost a tooth through a blow given by his master, the latter was to be fined ten Kāli chakrams (coin).

(2) If a Kallan had his ear torn under punishment, his master must pay a fine of six chakrams.

(3) If a Kallan had his skull fractured, his master must pay thirty chakrams, or in default have his own skull fractured.

(4) If a Kallan had his arm or leg broken, his master must pay a fine of twenty chakrams, give the injured man a certain amount of grain, cloths, etc., and likewise grant him in fee-simple as much nanjey (wet cultivation) land as could be sown with a kalam of seed, and two kurukkams of punjey (dry cultivation) land.

(5) If a Kallan were killed, his master must pay a fine of one hundred chakrams, or in default be put at the mercy of the murdered man's relatives.

It is recorded in the Cuddapah Manual that a Yerukala came to a certain village, and, under the pretence of begging, ascertained which women wore valuable jewels,

and whether the husbands of any such were employed at night in the fields. In the night he returned, and, going to the house he had previously marked, suddenly snatched up the sleeping woman by the gold ear-ring she wore with such violence as to lift up the woman, and in such a way as to wrench off the lobe of the ear. In a case of assault with robbery committed in 1901 in the outskirts of Salem town by some Koravars on an old man, the lobe of his ear was cut off in order to remove his ear-ring. A new form of house-robbery has been recently started by the Koravas. They mark down the residence of a woman, whose jewels are worth stealing, and lurk outside the house before dawn. Then, when the woman comes out, as is the custom, before the men are stirring, they snatch her ear-rings and other ornaments, and are gone before an alarm can be raised. Recently, in a fight between two women in Madras, one bit off the lobe of the ear of the other. In a report on the Coimbatore dispensary, 1852, Mr. Porteous mentions that he treated within the year "lacerated wounds on eight out- and nine in-patients. All these formed cases of criminal process, and were all inflicted by tearing off the ear ornaments forcibly." \*

Mr. (now Sir) F. A. Nicholson, who was some years ago stationed at Ramnād in the Madura district, tells me that the young Maravan princesses used to come and play in his garden, and, as they ran races, hung on to their ears, lest the heavy ornaments should rend asunder the filamentous ear lobes.

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\* Chevers. Manual of Medical Jurisprudence for India.

Among the female Tiyan of Malabar the practice of dilating the lobes of the ears prevails, though the deformity is not carried to such an extreme length as in Madura and Tinnevely. The operation is performed, when the child is a few months or a year old, either by goldsmiths or by astrologers called Pannikar in South and Kanisan in North Malabar. The lobe is pierced with a gold pin or thorn, and a thread inserted to prevent the wound from closing up. The ear is dressed daily with butter. After a week or two the thread is replaced by a thin plug of wood, and subsequently gradual dilatation is effected by means of pith soaked in water to make it swell. Further dilatation is effected by means of solid wooden ornaments, or rolls of lead or cadjan.

Writing in the sixteenth century concerning the Nāyars of the west coast, Cæsar Frederick states\* that "the Nairi and their wives use for a braverie to make great holes in their eares, and so bigge and wide that it is incredible, holding this opinion, that the greater the holes bee, the more noble they esteeme themselves. I had leave of one of them to measure the circumference of one of them with a thread, and within that circumference I put my arme up to the shoulder, clothed as it was, so that in effect they are monstrous great. Thus they doe make them when they be litel, for then they open the eare and hang a piece of gold or lead thereat, and within the opening, in the hole they put a certain leafe that they have for that purpose, which maketh the hole so great." Further, Ralph Fitch, writing about the

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\* Hakluyt's Voyages. Glasgow Edition, 1904.

inhabitants of Cochin, states \* that "the men be of a reasonable stature; the women litle; all black, with a cloth bound about their middle hanging down to their hammes; all the rest of their bodies be naked: they have horrible great eares with many rings set with pearles and stones."

Allusion may next be made to the widespread custom of tattooing the skin. In a paper on tattooing (or tatuing) read at the Anthropological Institute in January 1888, Miss Buckland refers to the practice of tattooing among the Nāgās of Assam, and to the tattooing of breeches, reaching from the waist to the knee, with which the male Burman is adorned. But, in the map illustrating the paper, Peninsular India, south of 20°, is left a perfect and absolute blank. And, in the discussion which followed the reading of the paper, Colonel Kincaird, recognising the hiatus, remarked that "his observation led him to believe that this custom is wide spread on the arms and legs among the women of the lower castes of the Tamil, etc., races in the south and south-east of the peninsula."

Of tattooing an admirable detailed account is given in the Mysore census report, 1901. The following note on the practice of tattooing, as carried on in the city of Madras, is mainly based on information extracted in the course of interviews with professional female tattooers, of whom the first arrived in a condition of maudlin intoxication. These women belong to the class of Koravas, or Yerukalas, "a vagrant tribe found

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\* Hakluyt's Voyages. Glasgow Edition, 1804.

throughout the Madras Presidency, who wander about the country in gangs, selling baskets, carrying salt, telling fortunes, and pilfering and robbing whenever an opportunity occurs. As house-breakers they are especially expert, and burglary is their favourite crime." \* The men are also employed in hunting, bird-snaring, and as actors of native plays, which they perform on the road-side. Sometimes they masquerade as mendicants, and go about, beating a drum, and begging from house to house in the bazār. From the Police records I gather that a gang of this thief class camped in a certain spot in the Vizagapatam district for more than two months. The women went about begging, and effecting an entrance into respectable houses by tattooing girls. The gang then suddenly disappeared. "Both men and women of the Korava class wear tattoo marks of circular or semi-circular form on their foreheads and forearms. When they are once convicted, they enlarge or alter in some other way the tattoo marks on their forearms, so that they may differ from the previous descriptive marks of identification entered by the Police in their search books and other records." †

The female tattooers leave Madras during the harvest season, and pay professional visits to the neighbouring districts, travelling as far as Pondicherry in the south and Cuddapah in the north. By these women Brāhmins, Sūdras of all classes, Paraiyans, and Tamil-speaking Muhammadans (Labbais) are operated on. The patterns

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\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

† P. Paupa Rao Naidu, *History of Railway Thieves*, 1900.

range from a dot or straight line to complex geometrical or conventional designs. Figures of wild animals are not met with, but scorpions, birds, fishes, flowers and the Vaishnava sect mark are common. So, too, are the initials or name in Tamil characters on the forearm. Sometimes Hindu males are tattooed, as an amusement, when boys, or, in some cases among the lower classes, when grown up. For example, many Pulayan men in Travancore are tattooed on the forehead with a crescent and circular spot, and the Irulas of Chingleput with a vertical stripe along the middle of the forehead. The Chakkiliyan men of Madras are very freely tattooed, not only on the forehead, but, also with their name, conventional devices, dancing girls, etc., on the chest and upper extremities. The following information was supplied by a Tamil man, with a European ballet-girl tattooed on his upper arm, who was engaged in varnishing cases in one of the museum galleries. "Some years ago I went to Ceylon with a native theatrical company. While in Colombo I made the acquaintance of a Sinhalese who was a professional tattooer. He had an album of patterns. I was attracted by their beauty, and subjected myself to the operation. It was an easy and painless operation as compared with that of the Madras tattooer. The Sinhalese man had the needles tied together in a different way, *e.g.*, for pricking straight lines five or six needles are tied together in a row; for pricking curves the needles are arranged in a curve. The Madras tattooer has the needles arranged in a bundle, and the operation, as performed with them, is painful, and sometimes

followed by swelling and ulceration.” Asked whether he was glad he had been tattooed, he replied that, when he got married he was ashamed of it, and kept it hidden by his cloth. One result of emigration to Burma is that Tamil men sometimes return from that country tattooed with elaborate devices worthy of the tattooed nobleman in a booth at a race-meeting. The Eurasian body being enveloped in clothes, it was not till they stripped before me for the purposes of anthropometry that I became aware how prevalent the practice of tattooing is among the male members of the community. Nearly all the hundred and thirty men whom I examined were, in fact, tattooed on the chest, upper arms, forearms, wrists, back of the hands, or shoulders. The following are a few of the devices in blue, with occasional red, recorded in my notes :—

Queen Alexandra.	Watteau shepherdess.
Steam-boat.	Burmese lady.
Ballet-girl.	Elephant.
Flowers in a pot.	Sailing boat.
The word ‘Mercy’.	Initials of inamorata.
Royal arms.	Scorpion.
Crown and flags.	Crossed swords.
Cross and anchor.	Bracelets.
Dancing girl.	Lizard.
Heart and cross.	Bugles.

Many of the Roman Catholic Eurasians of Malabar have a bird tattooed on their forearms as the emblem of the Holy Ghost. And, in like manner, some Syrian Christians are tattooed with the sign of the cross.



Among native females the parts of the body selected for the operation are the arm, fore-leg, forehead, cheeks, and chin. But sometimes, in cases of muscular pain or other disorder, the operation is performed as a remedial agent over the shoulder joint, or on the thigh, or other parts of the body. A legend runs to the effect that, many years ago, a Paraiyan woman wished her upper arms and chest to be tattooed in the form of a bodice. The operation was successfully performed until the region of the heart was reached, and then a vulnerable part was punctured by the needles, with the result that the woman died. Whence has arisen a superstitious objection to tattooing of the breasts. Tattooing is sometimes a sign that puberty has been reached.

The Tamil equivalent of tattooing is pachai-kuthukirathu, or pricking with green. The marking ink is prepared in the following manner. Turmeric (*kappa manja*) powder and agathikirai (leaves of *Sesbania grandiflora*) are rubbed together in a mortar or on a grinding stone. The mixture is spread on a thin cloth, and rolled up in the form of a wick, which is placed in an open lamp charged with castor-oil. The wick is lighted, and the lamp covered with a new earthen pot, on the inside of which the lamp black is deposited. This is scraped off, and mixed with human milk or water. Instead of agathikirai, arugampillu (green parts of *Cynodon Dactylon*) or karisirangkani (*Eclipta alba*) may be used in the preparation of the wick. As a pricking instrument, three or more sewing needles are fastened together with thread. In the performance of the operation, the pattern, selected

from the dirty bundle of drawings on paper, is first traced on the skin with a blunt stick dipped in the prepared ink, which is pricked in with the needles. The part is then washed with cold water, and a coat of ink rubbed over the surface. To allay the pain, oil is applied, and a small quantity of turmeric powder is rubbed in, to brighten the colour and prevent swelling. The Korava women, being illiterate, are unable to tattoo initials or names unless they are first drawn for them. They are able to execute the complicated patterns, with which they are, from long practice, familiar, with considerable dexterity, and will tattoo any pattern which is new to them, provided that it is first drawn. The woman who described the tattooing process to me traced out very elaborate patterns with great rapidity with the blunt stick which she was accustomed to use, but could make no way at all with a pencil. The Burmese patterns are, as already indicated, far more artistic, varied, and complicated than those executed by Koravas; and some of these patterns are now being copied by the Madras tattooers. The tattooer's fee is said to range from a quarter-anna for a dot or line to twelve annas for a complex design. And in up-country villages payment appears to be made in kind, and a present of rice to be the usual remuneration.

A Kuncha Korava tattooer woman, whom I interviewed, kept her needles and drawing stick in a hollow bamboo, and the marking mixture in the scooped out fruits of the bael (*Ægle Marmelos*) and palmyra palm (*Borassus flabellifer*). The hot weather, she said, is more favourable than the cold season for the operation, as the swelling

is less. To check which she applied a mixture of lamp-oil, turmeric, and avarai (*Dolichos Lablab*) leaves.

Tattooing does not find any favour with North Travancore Nāyars. It is only in the case of Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon that the custom seems to prevail. Some accounts trace it to the influence of a Moghul Sirdar, who invaded Travancore in 1680 A.D.

In a recent article \* Mr. Risley identifies the tattooed designs of the Dōmbs of Jeypore as being related to the religion and mythology of the tribe; totems; and having reference to their traditional avocations.

Among the Todas of the Nīlgiris, the operation is performed by an elderly woman. Women only are tattooed, and, it is said, they must have borne one or more children. Girls are, however, occasionally tattooed after reaching puberty, but before giving birth to children. And I have seen several multiparæ, in whom the absence of tattoo marks was explained on the ground that they were too poor to afford the expense of the operation, or that they were always suckling or pregnant—conditions in which the operation would not, it was said, be free from danger. The dots and circles on the chest, back, arms, and legs, of which the simple devices are made up, are marked out with lamp-black made into a paste with water, and the pattern is picked in with the spines of the common mountain barberry (*Berberis aristata*). The Badaga women of the Nīlgiris use the spines of *Carissa spinarum* for the same purpose.

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\* Man. July, 1902.

I have seen a Bēdar of the Bellary district, who had dislocated his shoulder when a lad, and been tattooed over the deltoid with the figure of Hanumān (the monkey god) to relieve the pain.

In the Bellary district the Lingayats have one Basivi (dedicated prostitute) of their caste in every large village. Her initiation is carried out in the following way. "The headmen of the caste meet, and perform a ceremony wedding her to her caste. A tāli, on which is figured a bull (Nandi, Siva's bull) is tied by the village Jangam or priest, who draws a lingam on a betel leaf, and tattoos the figure on her upper arm, over the deltoid, with juice of the cashew-nut (*Anacardium occidentale*). This is often omitted, and she is not marked in this way."\*

An interesting custom, which prevails among the Kādīrs and Mala Vēdars of the Anaimalai hills and Travancore, and among them alone, so far as I know, of the entire population of the Indian peninsula, is that of chipping all or some of the incisor teeth, both upper and lower, into the form of a sharp-pointed, but not serrated cone. The operation, which is performed with a chisel or bill-hook and file by members of the tribe skilled thereat on Kādir boys at the age of eighteen, and girls at the age of ten or thereabouts, has been thus described. The girl to be operated on lies down, and places her head against a female friend, who holds it tightly. A third woman takes a sharpened bill-hook, and chips away the teeth till they are shaded to a point, the girl operated on writhing and groaning with the pain. After the

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\* F. Fawcett, Journ. Anth. Soc., Bombay, II, 1881.

operation she looks dazed, and in a very few hours the face begins to swell. Pain and swelling last for a day or two, accompanied by severe headache. The Kādīrs say that chipped teeth make an ugly person look handsome, and that one whose teeth have not been chipped has teeth like, and looks like a cow. An ugly old Mala Vēdar man, who had his teeth very slightly filed, on being asked why he had not conformed to the tribal fashion, grinned and said "What beauty I was born with is good enough for me." Probably the operation had proved more than he could bear; or, may be, he could not afford to pay the betel-nut and leaves which are the customary fee of the filer. The operation is performed with a curved bill-hook with a serrated edge.\* The fact is worthy of record, as a link between the inhabitants of Southern India and Ceylon, that deformity of the teeth exists as a tribal custom among the Rhodias, of whom M. Deschamps writes as follows.† "J'ai parcouru deux centres importants de Rhodias : dans l'un j'ai remarqué la pratique de la mutilation des dents, complètement ignorée par l'autre. Dans le premier, sur cinq ou six sujets observés, hommes et femmes, avaient les incisives supérieures limées, non point sur la tranche ou les bords inférieurs, ainsi que le font beaucoup de peuples primitifs, mais sur la face extérieure et sur toute la longueur d'une, deux ou trois incisives. Quelquefois la partie inférieure de la dent offre, en outre, un véritable sillon horizontal d'un demi à un millimètre de creux.

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\* Mrs. Evans : Madras Museum Bull. II, No. 3, 1899.

† E. Deschamps : *An Pays des Veddas*, Ceylon, 1890.

L'époque à laquelle se fait cette mutilation est indifférente, mais je l'ai observée sur une petite fille de treize ans. La raison qu'ils me donnèrent de cette coutume, pour diminuer la longueur de la face, est non moins curieuse."

Turning now to fashion associated with religious or superstitious observance. It is needless to dilate on the prevalent Hindu custom of painting religious marks, or smearing sacred ashes on the forehead and other parts of the body. Nor is it necessary to enlarge on circumcision as practised by the Muhammadan community. In connection, however, with circumcision, in the troublous times of the Muhammadan usurpation of Mysore and at the present day, some interesting facts are worthy of notice. It is recorded \* that "the prisoners taken by the French in the *Hannibal* to the number of nearly 500 were landed at Cuddalore in June, 1782. In August they were delivered over to Hyder Ally Khan, and marched to Bangalore. In October the youngest, to the number of 51, were sent to Seringapatam. Their heads were shaved, all their things were taken from them, and they were circumcised. All were bound on parade, and rings, the badge of slavery, were put into their ears. Several European boys were taught dancing in the country style and forced to dance in female dress before Tippoo." The operation was performed, when the victim of it was under the influence of a narcotic called majum, after, the hair had been cropped by a barber. It is narrated †

\* Narrative of William Drake, midshipman of the *Hannibal*. Seton-Karr. Selections from Calcutta Gazettes.

† Narrative of the sufferings of James Bristow, 1794.

that some of Haidar's European prisoners, after they had been made what was termed Mussulman, neglected no opportunity of showing their contempt for the religion of their tormentors, and their cruelty, by catching dogs and bandicoot rats, and circumcising them publicly.

When Tippoo (or Tipū) was at Calicut, the Pagans were deprived of the token of their nobility, a lock of hair called kudumi; and every Christian who appeared in the streets must either submit to be circumcised, or be hanged on the spot.\* Among other acts of cruelty committed by Tippoo, it is stated that, seeing a Lingayat woman selling curds in the street without a bodice, he ordered the cutting off of her breasts. As a result of which act the wearing of long garments came into use among the whole female population of Mysore. It is recorded that, on one occasion, a Nāyar woman appeared before the Zamorin of Calicut's lady with her breasts concealed, and they were cut off as the wearing of a bodice was considered immodest. Of other forms of punishment by mutilation, two further examples may be cited. During one of the voyages of Vasco de Gama to Malabar, "the Captain-major ordered them to cut off the hands and noses of all the crews, and put all that into one of the small vessels, into which he ordered them to put the friar, also without ears, nose, or hands, which he ordered to be strung round his neck, with a palm-leaf for the king of Calicut, on which he told him to have a curry made, to eat of what his friar brought

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\* Bartolomeo. Voyage to the East Indies, 1770-89.

him."\* In the Vizāgapatam Manual (1869) Mr. Carmichael states that "in cases of rape (in Jeypore) the procedure was to cut the woman's nose off, and, after beating the man well, to turn him out of the caste by stuffing his mouth with beef. In cases of murder, the Rājah generally had the man's hands, nose, and ears cut off, but, after all that, he seldom escaped the vengeance of the deceased's relatives. There is a man now living in the village of Bassoonnee, whose hands were cut off by order of Rājah Chaitan Deo fourteen years ago. He was taken red-handed straight to the Rājah, and his hands were off within an hour of the commission of the deed. He has been supported by the Rājah ever since."

At the Parlakimedi rebellion in the last century, the rebels wounded the peasants, or cut off their noses, and sent them into Mr. Russell, who had been sent to Ganjam with a special commission by Government, saying that the blood was upon his head.† It is recorded by Moor‡ that, during the operations against Tippoo Sultan, "the enemy one day caught a fine young woman belonging to our line, and, to their indelible disgrace, cut off her nose, and in that condition the poor creature came back to camp." Haidar and Tippoo were in the habit of cutting off the noses and ears of those of their English prisoners who were caught when attempting to escape. One was afterwards led round the fort on a jackass, with his face to the tail. Tippoo, when before Mangalore, cut off

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\* Correa Three Voyages of Vasco de Gama.

† S. P. Rice. Occasional Essays on Native South Indian Life, 1102.

‡ Narrative of the Operation of Little's Detachment.



the noses and ears of a whole sepoy brigade, which attempted to prevent an execution.\* In the days of Tirumala Nayakar, the Mysoreans had been cutting off noses, and sending them by sackfuls back to Mysore. So the troops of the Naykar scattered through Mysore for noses to cut off in retaliation. They succeeded even to the extent of cutting off the nose of the king himself. This was called the chase after noses.†

To revert to circumcision. It is a curious fact that many of the Kallans of the Madura district practise this rite. The origin thereof is uncertain, though it has been suggested that it is a survival of a forcible conversion to Muhammadanism of a section of the Kurumbas who fled northwards on the downfall of their kingdom.‡ At the time appointed for the initiatory ceremony, the Kallan youth is carried on the shoulders of his maternal uncle to a grove or plain outside the village, where betel is distributed among those who have assembled, and the operation is performed by a barber-surgeon. *En route* to the selected site, and throughout the ceremony, the conch shell (musical instrument) is blown. The youth is presented with new cloths. It is noted in the Kurnool Manual (1886) that the Katikavandlu, who sell mutton, are either Mahārattas or Mussulmans. Some are called Sultāni butchers, or Hindus forcibly circumcised by the late Nawāb of Kurnool. From the Mysore Census Report, 1891, I learn in connection with the Myāsa

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\* Chevers. *Op. cit.*

† J. S. Chandler, *Calcutta Review*, 1903.

‡ Nelson, *Madura Manual*.

Bēdars (hunters) that “the rite of circumcision is performed on boys of ten or twelve years of age. The custom seems to have been imbibed when the members of this sub-caste were included in the hordes of Haidar Ali. It also points to a possible conversion, more or less complete, to Islam in those periods of disorder, and a subsequent relapse to Hinduism. For, simultaneously with the circumcision, other rites, such as the pancha-gavyam, the burning of the tongue with a nīm stick, etc. pre-eminently Brāhmanical, are likewise practised prior to the youth being received into communion.” “The Myāsas,” Mr. Francis writes,\* “seem quite proud of the custom, and scout with scorn the idea of marrying into any family, in which circumcision is not the rule. A very small piece of the skin is cut off by a man of the caste, and the boy is then kept for eleven days in a separate hut, and touched by no one. His food is given him on a piece of stone. On the twelfth day he is bathed, given a new cloth, and brought back to the house, and his old cloth and stone are thrown away. His relations in a body then take him to a tangēdu (*Cassia auriculata*) tree, to which are offered cocoanuts, flowers, and so forth.” Of conversion to Muhammadanism at the present time, a good example is afforded by the Cherumans of Malabar, concerning whom the Census Superintendent, 1881, writes as follows. “Conspicuous for their degraded and humiliating disabilities are the Cherumars. This caste numbered 99,009 in Malabar at the Census of 1871, and, in 1881, is returned as only 64,725. There are 40,000

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\* Manual of the Bellary district, 1804.

fewer Cherumans than there would have been but for some disturbing influence, and this is very well known to be conversion to Muhammadanism. This honour of Islam once conferred on the Cheruman, he moves at one spring several places higher than that which he originally occupied, and the figures show that nearly 50,000 Cherumans and others have availed themselves of the opening. The conversion of a Pariah, or low-caste Hindu to Muhammadanism raises him distinctly in the social scale, and he is treated with more respect by Hindus." Among the Mukkuvan fishermen of Malabar conversion to Islam is common. The converts are called Pu-Islam or Putiya Islam (new Islam).\* During the disturbance in Tinnevely in 1899, some of the Shānars, men, women, and children, are said to have gone into the Muhammadan fold, their places of worship being converted into improvised mosques. The men shaved their heads, and grew beards; and the women had to make sundry changes in their dress. And, in the case of boys, the operation of circumcision was performed. When an adult Hindu joins the sect of Daira or Māhadēv Muhammadans in Mysore as a convert, an interesting mock rite of circumcision is gone through, as a substitute for the real operation. A betel leaf is wrapped round the penis, so that it projects beyond the glans, and is snipped instead of the prepuce.

As in Africa, and among the American Indians, Australians, and Polynesians, so in Southern India artificial deformity of the hand is produced by chopping off some

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\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

of the fingers. Writing in 1815, Buchanan (Hamilton)\* says that “near Deonella or Deonhully, a town in Mysore, is a sect or sub-division of the Murressoo Wocal caste, every woman of which, previous to piercing the ears of her eldest daughter, preparatory to her being betrothed in marriage, must undergo the amputation of the first joints of the third and fourth fingers of her right hand. The amputation is performed by the blacksmith of the village, who, having placed the finger in a block, performs the operation with a chisel. If the girl to be betrothed is motherless, and the mother of the boy has not before been subjected to the amputation, it is incumbent on her to suffer the operation.” Of the same ceremony among the Morsa-Okkala-Makkalu of Mysore the Abbé Dubois says † that, if the bride’s mother be dead, the bridegroom’s mother, or in default of her the mother of the nearest relative, must submit to the cruel ordeal. In an editorial footnote it is stated that this custom is no longer observed. Instead of the two fingers being amputated, they are now merely bound together, and thus rendered unfit for use. In the Census Report, 1891, it is recorded that this type of deformity is found among the Morasas, chiefly in Cuddapah, North Arcot, and Salem. “There is a sub-section of them, called Veralu icche Kāpulu, or Kāpulu who give the fingers, from a curious custom which requires that, when a grandchild is born in a family, the wife of the eldest son of the grandfather must have the last two joints of the third and

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\* East India Gazetteer.

† Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies. Ed. 1897

fourth fingers of her right hand amputated at a temple of Bhairava." Further, it is stated in the Manual of the Salem district (1883) that "the practice now observed in this district is that, when a grandchild is born in a family, the eldest son of the grandfather, with his wife, appears at the temple for the ceremony of boring the child's ear, and there the woman has the last two joints of the third and fourth fingers chopped off. It does not signify whether the father of the first grandchild born be the eldest son or not, as in any case it is the wife of the eldest son who has to undergo the mutilation. After this, when children are born to other sons, their wives in succession undergo the operation. When a child is adopted, the same course is pursued."

The origin of the custom is narrated by Wilks,\* and is briefly this. Mahadeo or Siva, who was in great peril, after hiding successively in a castor-oil and jawāri plantation, concealed himself in a *linga-tonde* shrub from a *rākshasa* who was pursuing him, to whom a *MarasaVak-kaliga* cultivator indicated, with the little finger of his right hand, the hiding-place of Siva. The god was only rescued from his peril by the interposition of Vishnu in the form of a lovely maiden meretriciously dressed, whom the lusty *rākshasa*, forgetting all about Siva, attempted to ravish, and was consumed to ashes. On emerging from his hiding-place, Siva decreed that the cultivator should forfeit the offending finger. The culprit's wife, who had just arrived at the field with food for her husband, hearing this dreadful sentence, threw

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\* History of Mysore.

herself at Siva's feet, and represented the certain ruin of her family if her husband should be disabled for some months from performing the labours of the farm, and besought the deity to accept two of her fingers instead of one from her husband. Siva, pleased with so sincere a proof of conjugal affection, accepted the exchange, and ordered that her family posterity in all future generations should sacrifice two fingers at his temple as a memorial of the transaction, and of their exclusive devotion to the god of the lingam. For the following account of the performance of the rite, as carried out by the Morasa Vakkaligaru of Mysore I am indebted to an article by Mr. V. N. Narasimmiyengar.\* These people are roughly classed under three heads, viz. : "(1) those whose women offer the sacrifice ; (2) those who substitute for the fingers a piece of gold wire, twisted round the fingers in the shape of rings. Instead of cutting the fingers off, the carpenter removes and appropriates the rings ; (3) those who do not perform the rite. The *modus operandi* is as nearly as possible the following. About the time of the new moon in Chaitra, a propitious day is fixed by the village astrologer, and the woman who is to offer the sacrifice performs certain ceremonies or pūja in honour of Sīva, taking food only once a day. For three days before the operation she has to support herself with milk, sugar, fruits, etc., all substantial food being eschewed. On the day appointed, a common cart is brought out, painted in alternate stripes with white and red ochre, and adorned with gay flags, flowers, etc.,

\* Ind. Ant., II, 1873.

in imitation of a car. Sheep or pigs are slaughtered before it, their number being generally governed by the number of children borne by the sacrificing woman. The cart is then dragged by bullocks, preceded by music, the woman and her husband following, with new pots filled with water and small pieces of silver money, borne on their heads, and accompanied by a retinue of friends and relatives. The village washerman has to spread clean cloths along the path of the procession, which stops near the boundary of the village, where a leafy bower is prepared, with three pieces of stone installed in it, symbolising the god Siva. Flowers, fruits, cocoanuts, incense, etc., are then offered, varied occasionally by an additional sheep or pig. A wooden seat is placed before the image, and the sacrificing woman places upon it her right hand with the fingers spread out. A man holds her hand firmly, and the village carpenter, placing his chisel on the first joints of her ring and little fingers, chops them off with a single stroke. The pieces lopped on are thrown into an ant-hill, and the tips of the mutilated fingers, round which rags are bound, are dipped into a vessel containing boiling gingily oil. A good skin eventually forms over the stump, which looks like a congenital malformation. The fee of the carpenter is one kanthirāya fanam (four annas eight pies) for each maimed finger, besides presents in kind. The woman undergoes the barbarous and painful ceremony without a murmur, and it is an article of the popular belief that, were it neglected, or if nails grow on the stump, dire ruin and misfortune will overtake the recusant family.

Staid matrons, who have had their fingers maimed for life in the above manner, exhibit their stumps with a pride worthy of a better cause. At the termination of the sacrifice, the woman is presented with cloths, flowers, etc., by her friends and relations, to whom a feast is given. Her children are placed on an adorned seat, and, after receiving presents of flowers, fruits, etc., their ears are pierced in the usual way. It is said that to do so before would be sacrilege." In a very full account of deformation of the hand by the Berulu Kodo sub-sect of the Vakkaliga caste in Mysore, Mr. F. Fawcett says,\* that it was regularly practised until the Commissioner of Mysore put a stop to it about twenty years ago. "At present some take gold or silver pieces, stick them on to the finger's ends with flour paste, and either cut or pull them off. Others simply substitute an offering of small pieces of gold or silver for the amputation. Others, again, tie flowers round the fingers that used to be cut, and go through a pantomime of cutting by putting the chisel on the joint, and taking it away again. All the rest of the ceremony is just as it used to be." The introduction of the decorated cart, which has been referred to, is connected by Mr. Fawcett with a legend concerning a zamindar, who sought the daughters of seven brothers in marriage with three youths of his family. As carts were used in the flight from the zamindar, the ceremony is, to commemorate the event, called *bandi dēvuru*, or god of cars. As by throwing earrings into a river the fugitives passed through it, while the zamindar was

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\* Journ. Anth. Soc., Bombay, I, 1885.



drowned, the caste people insist on their women's ears being bored for earrings. And, in honour of the girls who cared more for the honour of their caste than for the distinction of marriage into a great family, the amputation of part of two fingers of women of the caste was instituted. Since the prohibition to cut off fingers, Mr. Rice says \* that the women content themselves with putting on a gold or silver finger-stall or thimble, which is pulled off instead of the end of the finger itself.

I pass on to the subject of the manufacture of eunuchs by castration, for the following account of which I have to indent on an article on the Kojahs by Dr. J. Shortt.† “The Kojahs,” he writes, “are the artificially created eunuchs, in contradistinction to the Higras (impotents) or natural eunuchs. Some years ago there were three Kojahs at the head of the State prison or royal mahāl at Vellore, in charge of some of the wives, descendants, and other female connections of Tippu Sultan. These men were highly respected, held charges of considerable trust, and were Muhammadans by birth. Tales were often repeated that the zenāna women (slaves and adopted girls) were in the habit of stripping them naked, and poking fun at their helplessness. There were two Kojahs in the employ of the late Nabob of the Carnatic. They were both Africans. On the death of the Nabob the Government allowed one of them a pension of fifteen rupees a month. Sometimes Hindus, Sūdras, and Brāhmans subject themselves to the operation (of castration) of their own accord

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\* Mysore.

† Journ. Anth. Inst., II, 1878.

from a religious impression. Others, finding themselves naturally impotent, consider it necessary to undergo the operation, to avoid being born again at a future birth in the same helpless state. The operation is generally performed by a class of barbers, sometime by some of the more intelligent of the eunuchs themselves, in the following manner. The patient is made to sit on an upturned new earthen pot, being previously well drugged with opium or bhang. The entire genitals being seized by the left hand, an assistant, who has a bamboo lath slit in the centre, runs it down quick close to the pubis, the slit firmly embracing the whole of the genitals at the root, when the operator, with a sharp razor, runs it down along the face of the lath, and removes penis, testicles, and scrotum in one swoop, leaving a large clean open wound behind, in which boiling gingily oil is poured to staunch the bleeding, and the wound covered over with a soft rag steeped in warm oil. This is the only dressing applied to the wound, which is renewed daily, while the patient is confined in a supine position to his bed, and lightly fed with conjee (rice gruel), milk, etc. During the operation the patient is urged to cry out 'Din' (the faith in Mahomed) three times." A local eunuch, whom I interviewed, informed me that castration used to be performed in Hyderabad at about the age of sixteen. A pit,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep, was dug in the ground, and filled with ashes. And, after the operation, the patient had to sit on the ashes, with crossed legs, for three days. The operation was performed under the influence of narcotics by a Pir—the head of the Kojah community

Of branding as a form of mutilation many examples are afforded in Southern India. The Kota men of the Nilgiris have the cicatrix of a burn made as a tribal mark with a burning cloth across the lower end of the back of the forearm when they are more than eight years old. Many of the Toda men have one or more raised cicatrices forming nodulous growths (keloids) on the right shoulder. These scars are produced by burning the skin with red-hot sticks of *Litswa* (the sacred fire-sticks); and the Todas believe that the branding enables them to milk the buffaloes with perfect ease. When the birth of a first child is expected in a Toda family, on the first new moon day a ceremony called *ur vot pimmi* takes place, during which an elderly woman rolls up a rag to the size of a small wick, dips it in oil, lights it, and with the burning end brands the pregnant woman's hands in four places, one at each end of the lowest joints of the right and left thumbs, and one dot on each wrist. Sometimes branding is resorted to as a curative agent, and, when sick people are in a state of collapse from high fever, they are branded between the eyebrows, on the toes, or nape of the neck, with a piece of bangle glass, leather, nīm stick, or piece of turmeric.

Flat, round cicatrices on the forehead, chest, and nape of the neck, are said to be found in every caste in some parts of the Kistna district. They are caused by branding with turmeric or a cheroot for infantile convulsions, which are believed to be caused by the babies inhaling tobacco smoke in ill-ventilated rooms. I have seen men of the Māla and other castes branded with a circle round

the navel as a cure for colic, and a Kaikōlan man branded with a series of large and small discs on the chest and abdomen for illness when he was a baby. The Rev. S. Nicholson informs me that, after a new-born Māla child has been washed, it is branded with a hot needle in twenty vital parts and handed back, roaring lustily, to its mother. Some Lingayat children are branded with a hot needle on the stomach, under the idea that disease is hereby warded off. Children who suffer from fits are branded with a heated twig of margosa or a glass bangle. Some Shānāns, at Nazareth, were branded on the forehead to cure sore-eyes during childhood. The Kathira vandlu (scissors people), and other nomadic tribes, are branded under the following conditions. As the gangs move on, exposed to changes of weather, the children sometimes get a disease called sandukatlu or palakurkura. The symptoms are similar to those which children sometimes have when they are teething. As a curative agent, they are branded on the face between the eyebrows, or the outer corners of the eyes, and sometimes on the abdomen. The brand-marks on the face and corners of the eyes are circular, and those on the abdomen generally horizontal. The circular marks are made with a long piece of saffron, one end of which is burnt for the purpose, or with an indigo-dyed cloth rolled like a pencil, and burnt at one end. The horizontal marks are made with a hot needle. Similar brand-marks are made by some caste Hindus on their children. In some parts of the Mysore province and Salem district, when a child is born, it is at once branded on various parts of the body, *e.g.*, near the

navel, on the foot, back of the hands, face, nape of the neck, and sides of the abdomen. The Bestas of North Arcot are divided into Telugu Bestas and Parikiti Bestas, the difference between whom is chiefly one of religious observance, the former being in the habit of getting themselves branded on the shoulders with the Vaishnavite emblems, the chank and chakra,\* and the latter never undergoing this ceremony.† At the ceremony of dedication of a girl as a Basivi (dedicated prostitute) in the Bellary district, “a tāli, on which is depicted the nāmam of Vishnu, fastened to a necklace of black beads, is tied round her neck. She is given, by way of insignia, a cane as a wand, carried in the right hand, and a gopālam or begging basket, which is slung on the left arm. She is then branded with a heated brass instrument with a chakra on the right shoulder, a chank on the left shoulder, and a chakra over the right breast. The mark over the breast is never done, if there is any suspicion that the girl is not a virgin. The branding in Vishnu temples is sometimes merely a pretence, when the girl under dedication is very young, sandalwood paste being interposed between her skin and the heated instrument. Among the castes (Boyas, Kurubas, etc.), who make Basivis of their girls, a few men are branded on both shoulders with the chank and chakra, in order to obtain a closer communication with the deity, and to ensure their salvation. They are somewhat honoured among

\* The chank is the shell of the mollusc *Turbinella rapa*, of which the right handed variety is held very sacred. The chakra is the wheel of the law.

† Manual of the North Arcot district.

their fellows, and, at a marriage, receive the first betel leaf and other tokens of respect. Men who are branded are buried face downwards. Curiously, there are men of these castes who are dedicated to goddesses. They are generally beggars and wear female attire. They are not celibates, and may be branded at any time." \* A recent petition to a European Magistrate in the Bellary district runs as follows. Petition of —, aged about 17 or 18. I have agreed to become a Basivi, and get myself stamped by my guru (priest) according to the custom of my caste. I request that my proper age, which entitles me to be stamped, may be ascertained personally, and permission granted to be stamped. A case, in which branding was resorted to as a means of extorting a confession, is recorded by Mr. M. Lewin. † Two prisoners appeared before him with their bodies branded, while the arms of one of them were swollen from the effects of a tight ligature. It is noted in the diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai ‡ that, in 1738, the Governor of Pondicherry decided that "those who brought into the town pagoda coins having a fineness of less than eight touches would not only render themselves liable to a fine of 1,000 pagodas, but would be treated with ignominy by being branded with the figure of a dog, and being severely dealt with in other ways." The Oriya Haddis are said to admit to their ranks persons from all castes, except the Rellis and Mēdaras, after first branding their tongues with a

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\* F. Fawcett. *Journ. Anth. Soc.*, Bombay, 1891.

† Torture in Madras, 1851.

‡ Edited by Sir J. F. Price, Vol. I, 1904.

piece of gold wire.\* When an outsider is received into the fraternity of the Donga (thieving) Dāsaris, they take him “to the side of a river, make him bathe in oil, give him a new cloth, hold a council, and give a feast. They burn a twig of the sami (*Prosopis spicigera*) or margosa tree, and slightly burn the tongue of the party who has joined them, to make him a Donga-Dāsari. This is their way of purification and acceptance of every new member, who, soon after the tongue-burning ceremony, is given a seat in the general company, and made to partake of a common feast.”† When an excommunicated Badaga of the Nīlgiris is received back into the tribe, his tongue is burnt with sandalwood.

When proceeding on a pilgrimage to the temple of Subramaniya Swāmi at Palni, some devotees pierce their cheeks with a long silver needle, which traverses the mouth cavity; pierce the tongue with a silver arrow which is passed vertically through the protruded organ; and place a silver shield in front of the mouth, so that it may not be opened except when they are drinking milk. Some Dāsaris (Vaishnavite mendicants) have permanent holes in their cheeks, into which they insert the needles when they go about the country in pursuit of their profession. Writing concerning pilgrims, Mr. Fawcett says‡ that “one had his tongue protruding outside his teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was to be left in for forty days. Several of the

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\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

† T. M. Nātesa Sastri, *Calcutta Review*, October 1905.

‡ *Journ. Anth. Soc., Bombay*, II, 1890.

pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks) a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together, and of course the mouth open. People fed him, as he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, with rice, etc."

For the following note on branding as a religious ceremonial I am indebted to Mr. K. Rangachari. Branding for religious purposes is confined to the two sections—Sri Vaishnavas and Mādhvas—of the Hindu community. Sri Vaishnava Brāhmins are expected to undergo this ordeal at least once during their life-time, whereas Mādhva Brāhmins have to submit to it as often as they visit their guru (head of a mutt or religious institution). Of men of other castes, those who become followers of a Vaishnava or Mādhva Achārya (guru) or mutt, are expected to present themselves before the guru for the purpose of being branded. But the ceremony is optional, and not compulsory as in the case of the Brāhmins. Among Sri Vaishnavites the privilege of branding is confined to the elder members of a family, Sanyāsīs (ascetics), and the heads of the various mutts. All individuals, male and female, must be branded, after the upanayanam ceremony (thread marriage) in the case of males, and after marriage in the case of women. The disciples after a purificatory bath, and the usual worship to their god, proceed to the residence of the Achārya or to the mutt, where they are initiated into their religion,



and branded with the chakra on the right shoulder and chank on the left. The initiation consists in imparting to the disciple, in a very low tone, the mula munthra, the words namonarayanaya, the sacred syllable Om, and a few mantrams from the Brāhma Rahasyam (secrets about god). A person who has not been initiated thus is regarded as unfit to take part in the ceremonies which have to be performed by Brāhmans. Even close relations, if orthodox, will refuse to take food prepared or touched by the uninitiated.

Concerning Mādhvas, Monier Williams writes as follows.\* “They firmly believe that it is a duty of Vaishnavas to carry throughout life a memorial of their god and their persons, and that such a lasting outward and visible sign of his presence helps them to obtain salvation through him. ‘On his right arm let the Brāhman wear the discus, on his left the conch-shell.’ When I was at Tanjore, I found that one of the successors of Mādhva had recently arrived on his branding visitation. He was engaged throughout the entire day in stamping his disciples, and receiving fees from all according to their means.”

Mādhvas have four mutts to which they repair for the branding ceremony, viz. : Vyasarayya, Sumathendra and Mulabagal in Mysore, and Uttarāja in South Canara. The followers of the Uttarāja mutt are branded in five places in the case of male adults, and boys after the thread marriage. The situations and emblems selected are the chakra on the right upper arm, right side of the

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\* Brahmanism and Hindnism.

Plate XXVI.



Mādhva Brāhman.



chest, and above the navel; the chank on the left shoulder and left side of the chest. - Women, and girls after marriage, are branded with the chakra on the right forearm and the chank on the left. In the case of widows, the marks are impressed on the shoulders as in the case of males. The disciples of the three other mutts are generally branded with the chakra on the right upper arm, and chank on the left. As the branding is supposed to remove sins committed during the interval, they get it done every time they see their guru. There is with Mādhvas no restriction as to the age at which the ceremony should be performed. Even a new-born babe, after the pollution period of ten days, must receive the mark of the chakra, if the guru should turn up. Boys before the upanayanam, and girls before marriage, are branded with the chakra on the abdomen just above the navel. The copper or brass branding instruments (muthras) are not heated to a very high temperature, but sufficient to singe the skin, and leave a deep black mark in the case of adults, and a light mark in that of young people and babies. In some cases, disciples, who are afraid of being hurt, bribe the person who heats the instruments; but, as a rule, the guru regulates the temperature so as to suit the individual. If, for example, the disciple is a strong, well-built man, the instruments are well heated, and, if he is a weakling, allowed to cool somewhat before their application. If the operator has to deal with babies, he presses the instrument against a wet rag before applying it to the infant's skin. Some mata-thipathis (head priests of the mutt) are, it is said, inclined

to be vindictive, and to make a very hot application of the instruments, if the disciple has not paid the fee (*gurukānika*) to his satisfaction. The fee is not fixed in the case of Sri Vaishnavas, whereas Mādhvas are expected to pay from one to three months' income for being branded. Failure to pay is punished with excommunication on some pretext or other. The area of skin branded generally peels off within a week, leaving a pale mark of the muthra, which either disappears in a few months, or persists throughout life. Mādhvas should smear daily with gopi paste (white kaolin) five muthras on the following places: forehead, outer corners of the eyes, three places on the neck, the upper arms, chest, and three places on the abdomen. The names of these muthras are: *chakra*, chank or shanka, *gātha* (weapon of war used by Bhīma, one of the Pāndavas), *padma* (lotus), and *Narayana*.

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## TORTURE IN BYGONE DAYS AND A FEW STRAY SURVIVALS.

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IN 1855 a Commission was appointed by the Government of Madras to investigate all cases, which might be brought before the Commissioners, either of torture inflicted by instruments or other means, or of punishment of any kind illegally administered. In their report the Commissioners stated that to those to whom the word torture necessarily and immediately conveys ideas of the inquisition, thumb-screws, rack and wheel, such a term would probably appear inapplicable, as expressive of the degree of violence which their enquiries brought to light. On the other hand, if the word be used in the ordinary acceptation assigned to it by Dr. Johnson, "pain by which guilt is punished, or confession (and we may add money) extorted, then we think that it may with perfect propriety be applied to designate the practices prevalent in Madras." The very plays of the populace are said to have often excited the laughter of many a rural audience by the exhibition of revenue squeezed out of defaulters coin by coin, through the application of familiar "provocatives" under the superintendence of a caricatured Tahsildar (native magistrate). It is recorded that, on one occasion, a Tahsildar naively remarked that, had he not buried some suspected parties up to their necks in mud, and dipped others at the end of a picottah pole into a well within an inch of their lives, he would never have got the evidence which led to the conviction of a pack

of villains. A picottah is the old-fashioned form of machine still used for raising water, and consists of a long lever or yard pivotted on an upright post, weighted on the short arm, and bearing a line and bucket on the long arm. The Commissioners, in their report, incidentally refer to one Ali Khān, who became Nawāb of Bengal in 1718, and used to oblige defaulters to wear leather long-drawers filled with live cats. And one of his people ordered a pond to be filled with everything disgusting, to which, in scorn of the Hindus, he gave the name of 'Bickoont' (Paradise), and through this detestable pool the defaulters were dragged by a rope tied under their arms.

The following forms of torture and coercion, mainly culled from the report of the Commissioners, with additions, have been proved, or reported to have been inflicted for non-payment of Government tax or the elucidation of confession :—

1. Preventing an individual from going to his meals or other calls of nature, bringing water for cooking food, and sleeping; and preventing cattle from going to pasture by confining them in the house with its occupants.

2. Confinement in the stocks. In connection with this "penal and pedal machine" (Dean Hole) it was exacted by Regulation XI, 1816, that heads of villages have, in cases of a trivial nature such as abusive language and inconsiderable assaults or affrays, power to confine the offending parties in the village choultry (lock-up) for a time not exceeding twelve hours; or, if the offending parties are of the lower castes of the people, on whom it

may not be improper to inflict so degrading a punishment, to order them to be put in the stocks for a time not exceeding six hours. Some years ago a case was tried on appeal before the High Court of Madras,\* in which a Muhammadan dealer in miscellaneous wares was convicted by a native petty magistrate in the Trichinopoly district of theft of an iron measure and eight annas worth of copper coin, and sentenced to be put in the stocks for three hours. The High Court, on appeal, ruled that a Mahammadan cannot be said to belong to the lower castes of the people, and that it is probable that the framers of the regulation had in view those castes which, prior to the introduction of British rule, were regarded as servile. In another case which was argued before the High Court of Madras, a Māla, who was a convert to Christianity, was sentenced to confinement in the stocks for using abusive language. The Judge, in summing up, stated that "the test seems to be not what is the offender's creed, whether Muhammadan, Christian, or Hindū, but what is his caste. If he belongs to one of the lower castes, a change of creed would not, of itself, in my judgment, make any difference, provided he continues to belong to the caste. If he continues to accept the rules of the caste in social and moral matters, acknowledges the authority of the headmen, takes part in caste meetings and ceremonies, and, in fact, generally continues to belong to the caste, then, in my judgment, he would be within the purview of the regulation. If, on the other hand, he adopts the

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\* Indian Law Reports, Madras Series, 1888.



moral standards of Christianity instead of those in his caste, if he accepts the authority of his pastors and teachers in place of that of the headman of the caste, if he no longer takes part in the distinctive meetings and ceremonies of the caste . . . then he can no longer be said 'to belong to one of the lower castes of the people,' and his punishment by confinement in the stocks is no longer legal.' \*

More recently (1903) it was ruled by the High Court that the Shānāns belong to the lower classes, who may be punished by confinement in the stocks.

Some years ago a Brāhman was employed as the custodian of a village god and his appurtenances. A festival was coming on, and an inventory was taken. Some jewels, valued at about three hundred rupees, were missing. The Brāhman was suspected and questioned, but naturally made no confession. He was confined in the village stocks for a whole night under the order of the village munsif (magistrate) sitting in council with the kurnam (village accountant), and was subjected to various indignities. As morning broke, he confessed, and promised to point out where he had hidden the spoil. On his being released, he managed to put a pen-knife, which he had concealed, into the village munsif, and then cut his throat. The case was enquired into, and the police officer was satisfied that the man had suffered torture, but not at the hands of the police. The stocks were *en evidence* in a recent dispute between the Nāttukōttai Chettis landlords and their tenants in the Madura district.

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\* *Ibid.* 1901.

3. Flogging with an instrument composed of four or five plaited thongs of leather, three or four feet long. The thongs were attached to a ring, with another ring to serve as a handle. This form of scourge was known by Muhammadans as *zīrbund* (a martingale).

4. Beating with slippers.

5. Beating the legs, and other parts of the body, with a leather strap or tamarind switch.

6. Sembadavans (Tamil fishermen) are punished, by the village council, by being bound with ropes. Twigs of the tamarind tree are kept near them, to indicate flogging, and a knife to denote cutting of the tongue. Women are, as a punishment, made to carry a basket of rubbish and a broom round the village. It is on record\* that some European prisoners, serving under Haidar Ali, who had been circumcised, and made officers of a battalion of Chaylahs, were brought in front of their men, with their hands tied behind, and received three lashes with a bunch of tamarind twigs from each of the Chaylahs, which amounted to fifteen hundred lashes.

7. The *kittie* or *cheerata*.—Defined as a simple machine, consisting merely of two sticks tied together at one end, between which the fingers were placed as in a lemon squeezer. By means of this instrument the fingers were gradually bent backwards towards the back of the hand, until the sufferer, no longer able to endure the excruciating pain, yielded to the demands made on him. One case of squeezing the breast of a woman with the “*kitty*” was reported. If no kitties were ready at

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\* Narrative of the Sufferings of James Bristow, 1794.

hand, an order for them was given to the village carpenter. Strings of them, ready for application, are said to have been commonly and openly hung up in some zamindar's cutcherries (court-houses). In 1832 a European Judge gave evidence to the effect that he had seen a man with a finger double the usual thickness from injury by a kittie, consisting of two pieces of stick, like a vice, tied together at the end, on which the foot was stamped.

8. Placing the wrists between two pieces of wood, which were repeatedly squeezed together with great force, and binding very tightly round the arm a rough rope, charged with powdered chillies and mustard seed, and moistened with a solution of salt, which sometimes gave rise to extensive ulceration.

9. Beating the joints of the arms and legs with a wooden mallet.

10. Application of smart blows on the ankle bones with a short thick stick.

11. Compelling an individual to interlace his fingers, of which the ends were squeezed by the hands of peons (orderlies), who occasionally introduced the use of sand to secure a firmer grip.

12. Placing the hand flat on the ground, and then pressing downward at either end a stick placed horizontally over the back of the fingers.

13. A common form of extracting information is said to be entwining a wet string round the first joints of the fingers, bringing the end between the middle fingers, and tying the hand tightly back towards the elbow. The string is then beaten with a stick, as if it was a cotton-

carding machine. The vibration causes sufficient pain to make the most obdurate person speak out. Or cotton-wicks, saturated with oil, are wrapped round the fingers, and lighted in succession.

14. Tying by the hands to a tree, and beating with tamarind switches.

15. Tying in a stooping position to the wheel of a bandy (country cart).

16. Hanging up head downwards.

17. Suspension by the arms tied behind the back.

18. Striking two defaulters' heads against each other, or tying them together by the back hair.

19. Annānthāl.—Placing an individual in a stooping position, fastening a string to each great toe, passing the bight over the back of the neck, and putting a stone on his back. The angavastram or handkerchief of the defaulter was sometimes used as a substitute for the rope. Or the rope was made of a creeper, or straw, which could always be obtained in a village. In reporting on this form of ordeal, an officer commanding a regiment expressed his opinion as follows. "The stooping posture enforced by the leg and neck being held in proximity no doubt must be highly inconvenient, and to a plethoric Englishman might almost amount to torture, but to the supple cool-blooded native I should hesitate in describing the enforced attitude as one of torture."

20. Standing exposed to the sun, with a heavy stone on the head, on the back between the shoulders, or on the nape of the neck, with one foot on the ground, and the other leg raised by means of a string passed round the neck and big toe

21. Placing a person in the sun with a stone on his head, and the trigger of a matchlock shut upon his ear.

22. If a Jōgi pleads inability to pay the fine inflicted for committing adultery, he has to walk a furlong with a mill-stone on his head.

23. Squatting with the gluteal region touching the ground. The arms were then placed under and inside the thighs, and the individual was made to take hold of his ears, one with each hand. If he attempted to move, he was struck with a cane.

24. Passing an individual's turban or a wisp of grass over his neck, fastening it under the knees so as to put him in a bending posture, and placing a heavy stone on the back. In lieu of stones, lumps of mud were sometimes applied. And, in one case, a portion of a mud wall is specified.

25. Sitting in the sun, during the hottest part of the day, with the head of the hair all loose, and executing a curious operation of turning the head in a whirling manner, which was known as extracting the devil, the driving out of which was assisted by flagellation.

26. Sitting down with a stone in each hand, the palms upwards in line with the shoulder.

27. A large slab of stone, such as is used for building purposes, is placed on a man's chest and abdomen, with turbans between it and the skin, so that no mark of the stone is left thereon. Another man sits astride the stone, and brings pressure to bear.

28. Keeping an individual in a stooping posture by holding him down by the back-hair, while others were placed astride on his back.

29. Standing in water or mud, exposed to the heat or inclemency of the weather.

30. Standing upon one leg, with a large log of wood on the head.

31. One of a man's legs was pulled and tied to a tree, in the heat of the sun, as high as possible, while his body was secured to another tree, thereby compelling him to support himself only on one leg.

32. Suspension by the feet to the bough of a tree, or fastening an individual to a tree, under which a fire had been kindled for the purpose of suffocating him with the smoke. A woman, with a view to extorting a confession of theft (which she had not committed), was tied up by one arm to the branch of a tree, and, while suspended above the ground, her cloth having partly fallen off, she was whipped with tamarind switches on her private parts.

33. Binding the arms backwards very tightly with cords, to act as a tourniquet, and impede the circulation.

34. A man was reported to have swung a young girl by her hands and hair to the beam of his house, beaten her, and branded her face and arm with a hot knife, because she had taken nine pice (small coin) from his room.

35. Placing sharp-pointed stones in the hollows of the knees, and making the individual sit for hours together on his haunches.

36. Muskets were turned down by making a man support them with the muzzles resting on his great toes, in which position he continued for hours together in the heat of the mid-day sun.

37. A man was made to support another, exposed to the heat of the sun, in the position of horse and rider for a few hours, when the rider dismounted and was ridden by the other for the same length of time.

38. Twisting the ears, or the application of ear-twitchers.

39. Pounding the back with the fists.

40. Pinching the fleshy parts with sand.

41. Compression of small portions of the skin of the inner part of the thighs and other sensitive spots between the points of iron pincers.

42. Application of hot oil to the skin.

43. A man, having lost some small article from his house, proceeded, as a matter of ordinary routine, to dip the hands of his three wives into boiling cow dung, to induce them to confess.

44. Application of the end of a lighted cigar to various parts of the body.

45. Confinement in a small room, with a rat-snake for company.

46. Searing with hot irons, or branding with a hot sickle.

47. Driving thorns under the nails.

48. Putting a person into a room or cage, the floor of which is thickly studded with sharp nails, or into a closed room full of smoke. In the days of the Portuguese in Malabar, criminals are said to have been put into a barrel with the points of nails projecting into its interior, and rolled about.

49. Tightening a strong tape applied round the waist.

50. Making a man run up and down, while he was held by the ears, or pulled by the back-hair.

51. Pulling out, singeing, or lifting by the hairs of the moustache, which, besides inflicting physical pain, were considered a mark of disgrace.

52. Tying a scratching and burrowing beetle called the carpenter or potter's beetle or poolay insect, within a half cocoanut shell or cloth over the navel or scrotum. A European Police Officer tells me that he has tried the burrowing beetle on himself, and writes to me as follows. "My experiences were so dreadful that I should have willingly confessed to any crime to the District Magistrate, who was with me at the time. The subject's arms have to be tied behind his back, and he must lie flat on his back. The sensation is at first rather amusing, it then becomes annoying, and in a very few minutes positive agony. It is just as if the insects are getting into your vitals in swarms. A cold sweat, and an 'all gone,' feeling was the result. When the shell is removed, all unpleasant symptoms disappear, and no mark of any description in the region of the navel can be seen. This is, of course, very important in torture cases. I believe it is a common practice in the southern districts, and not confined to the police, but resorted to by village councils in the settlement of disputes."

53. Introduction of live blood-suckers (lizards with sharp claws) within the clothes. In recent years, a woman who was convicted of murder stated, in her appeal,



that she confessed because the police suspended her head downwards, beat her, stripped off her clothes, and threatened to let a live blood-sucker into her "body." In cases where confession by a woman is sought for, the following treatment is said to be resorted to. She is put into a pair of baggy Muhammadan trousers, which are tightly tied round the knees and waist. Within the trousers a large blood-sucker is let loose. The sharp claws and spines of the dorsal crest are said to be excessively irritating, as the animal wanders about in search of a haven between the legs or under the gluteal region from the prodding which it receives to keep it on the move. Two men who were living in concubinage with a widow could not get her to disgorge money wherewith they might indulge in cock-fighting and other local sports. They, accordingly, tied her knees into her arm-pits, and threatened to torture her with a blood-sucker. The threat was most effective, as they went off with something like twelve hundred rupees, leaving the widow trussed.

54. Application to the eyes of the acrid juice of the cashew-nut (*Anacardium occidentale*). The oil is at the present day used medicinally as a powerful rubefacient and vesicant. The Judge of Mangalore, many years ago, met with a case in which a person who found a boy stealing his cashew-nuts, rubbed the acrid juice into his eyes.\*

55. Beating the soles of the feet with twigs of the milk-hedge plant (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*), the juice of which

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\* Chevers. *Op. cit.*

produces severe blistering. In a false charge of torture, the juice of this plant was used to produce the appearance of branding.

56. In the Vizagapatam hill tracts, a species of nettle grows, which causes excruciating irritation of the skin, but leaves no mark. A person, tied down, and gently stroked with the nettle on the most sensitive portions of his external anatomy, will, it is reported, say whatever is required of him.

57. Squeezing the testicles.

58. Inserting chillies into the eyes, nostrils, or urethra. For the purpose of extracting confessions from women, a disgusting application of chillies was sometimes resorted to. A clergyman, many years ago, informed the Collector of Tanjore that, having missed a cheque from his table, he made enquiry among his servants concerning it. In order to ascertain whether it had been taken by the only child on the establishment, his eyes were filled with red chillies by the other servants.\*

59. Insertion of iron wire, a heated bougie, or straw into the urethra. A few years ago, a man who was admitted into hospital made a statement that he had been attacked three weeks previously by robbers, who thought he had some money concealed in a field. They threw him on his back, forced a piece of stiff spikey grass (spear-grass) into his urethra, and worked it up and down till it broke off short. The piece of grass, which was seven inches long, was removed by urethral incision. In a parallel case, a narrow strip of bamboo, and the midrib

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\* Chevers. *Op. cit.*

of the leaflet of a cocoanut tree smeared with powdered chillies, were used instead of a blade of grass.

60. A young girl was dropped down a well by a rope fastened round her neck, with a view to extorting a confession of theft.

61. Ducking in a pond on a cold morning, and then having the subject punkahed vigorously (presumably with a hand fan).

62. Dipping in wells and rivers, till the individual was half suffocated.

63. Putting a person into a nest of red ants is said to have been an effective method of extracting a confession. This, with the recollection of an encounter with red ants before me, I can readily believe.

64. A Urāli woman of the Coimbatore hills, who, after marriage, refuses to live with her husband, is punished thus. She is tied to a tree, and the Kolkāran (assistant to the head-man) empties the contents of a hornet or wasp's nest at her feet. After a few minutes the woman is questioned, and, if she agrees to live with her husband, she must, in token of assent, lick a mark made on his back by the Kolkāran with fowl's excrement, saying "You are my husband. In future I shall not quarrel with you, and will obey you." Even after this ordeal has been gone through, a woman may, on payment of a fine, leave her husband in favour of another man of the tribe.

65. Another form of punishment for a woman found guilty of adultery is to tie a mortar in front, and a cat on her back, and drag her through the streets, while the mortar drags her towards the ground, and the cat scratches her in its struggles to get free.

66. If a Malaiāli woman of the Javādi hills commits adultery, the young men of the tribe are set loose on her to work their wicked way, after which she is put in a pit filled with cow-dung and other filth. An old man naively remarked that adultery was very rare.

67. When a man of the Baidya (Billava) caste in South Canara had criminal intercourse with a Paraiyan woman, a form of punishment, known as gudi shudda, was resorted to in former days. Seven huts were erected, and set on fire. The delinquent was then made to pass through the fiery furnace.

68. Compelling a person to eat human excrement.

69. Tying bullock bones, and other degrading articles, round the neck.

70. Putting a low-caste man on the back of a man of higher caste.

71. Bringing a man's wife, sisters, or daughters, removing their clothing by force, and making them appear naked before himself and other men.

72. Tying the hair of the head to a donkey or buffalo's tail, and parading through the streets of the village.

73. Of trial by ordeal with boiling lead and oil, the following cases are recorded in the Tellicherry Factory diary, 1762. "The king regent of Colastria's minister being arrived, the Moorman accused by the Tivity this day dipped his fingers three times into boiling lead, scooping out some every time, after which his hand was sealed up in a bag as customary, to be opened on the third day. Three days later it is recorded that,

the Moorman's hand being this day unsealed, no burn or blister appeared upon it, whereon he was released, and the Tivity, his accuser, sentenced to pay him the sum of . . . fanams as a retaliation. A Nair, being accused by a Moor of intending to kill him with a musquet offered to clear himself by dipping his hand in boiling oil, which the Moor was at first willing to abide by. But an entry in the diary states that the Moor, having declined to abide by the decision of the Tryal of boiling oil, the Nair is released, and the Moor and two witnesses produced by him fined the sum of fifty fanams each, being esteemed agreeable to the custom of the country to have falsely accused him."

74. Among the Jōgis, as a proof of chastity, the ordeal of drinking a potful of cow-dung or chilly water has to be undergone. In former days, a person accused of adultery in Travancore was permitted to submit to the ordeal of dipping the hands in boiling ghī at the temple of Suchindram. This temple derives its name from Indra, who according to the legend, had illicit intercourse with Ahalya, the wife of Gautama Rishi, and had to undergo this form of ordeal.\*

From a collection of reports (1793) from Rājas and other native chiefs in Malabar relative to the system and usages observed by them and their ancestors in the administration of justice, I gather that, if any Brāhman was suspected of theft or cohabitation with a woman of low caste, the Rāja sent him, together with the four principal people of the country, with a letter to the

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\* S. Appadorai Iyer, MS.

pagoda of Sujindrah, where they were to inform the heads of the pagoda of all particulars. After the usual custom had been paid to them, a pot of cocoanut oil was boiled on a fire; and, when it was properly boiled, the suspected person dipped his hand into it. If the hand blistered, he was pronounced guilty. If a Nāyar was, in like manner, suspected, he had to submit to the ordeal in the fort of Baliapatnam.

75. To test the chastity of a Tangalān Paraiyan bride, the following ordeal had to be undergone on the wedding day, immediately after the tāli-tying ceremony. Some cakes were placed in boiling oil in an earthen or iron receptacle. The bride, after a bath and clad in wet clothes, had to pick out the cakes with her hand, after an examination of her hair, nails, and cloth, to see if she had about her any charm or magical drug. Immediately after taking out the cakes from the oil, she had to husk a small quantity of rice. And, if she did this successfully, her chastity was established. One form of punishment inflicted on Paraiyans by their head-man is making a man crawl on his hands and knees between the legs of a Paraiyan woman.

76. The following form of ordeal among the Koravans is described by Mr. F. S. Mullaly.\* “Should a Koravan suspect another of having committed a crime, and he denies it, several persons take new pots, put rice and water in them, and place them on the fire. Who-soever’s rice boils first has not committed the offence, but the owner of the second pot which boils is deemed the

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\* Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency.

guilty one, and he has to pay all the expenses. If two pots boil at the same time, they resort to trial by ordeal. A new pot is filled with boiling ghī with a four-anna piece in it, and the suspected person is told to take it out. If he is innocent, he will at once offer to do so; but, if guilty, so great is their superstition, he will at once confess."

77. In Travancore there was a judicial ordeal by snake bite. The accused thrust his hand into a mantle, in which a cobra was wrapped up. If it bit him, he was guilty; if not, he was innocent. "That we have here," Frazer writes,\* "a relic of totemism appears not only from the worship of snakes in the district, but also from the fact that, if a dead cobra was found by the people, it was burned with the same ceremonies as the body of a man of high caste."

78. The crocodile ordeal, in which a man swam across a sheet of water swarming with these beasts, was in vogue in Malabar, to determine the guilt or innocence of criminals. "The accused," Visscher writes,† "is compelled, after a solemn profession of innocence in the presence of the Brāhmīns and nobles, and of a great concourse of people to swim across this (Cranganor) river and back; or, if he cannot do this, he must be dragged through, holding on with his hands to a boat. If the crocodile pulls him under, it is a sign of his guilt; if otherwise, he is released as innocent."

79. The following method of discovering theft or any kind of concealment by chewing rice is described by

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\* Totemism, 1887

† Letters from Malabar.

Daniel Johnson.\* “ A Brāhmin is sent for, who writes down all the names of the people in the house, or who are suspected. Next day he consecrates a piece of ground by covering it with cow-dung and water, over which he says a long prayer. The people then assemble on this spot in a line facing the Brāhmin, who has with him some dry rice, of which he delivers to each person the weight of a four-cornered rupee, or that quantity weighed with the sacred stone called salagram, which is deposited in a leaf of the pippal or banyan tree. At the time of delivering it, the Brāhmin puts his right hand on each person's head, and repeats a short prayer; and, when finished, he directs them all to chew the rice, which at a given time must be produced on the leaves masticated. The person or persons, whose rice is not thoroughly masticated, or exhibits any blood with it, is considered guilty. The faith they all have of the power of the Brāhmin, and a guilty conscience operating at the same time, suppresses the natural flow of saliva to the mouth, without which the hard particles of the rice bruise and cut the gums, causing them to bleed, which they themselves are sensible of, and in most instances confess the crime.” The same writer gives the three following modes of ascertaining the persons guilty of practising witchcraft:—

*First.*—Branches of the saul (*Shorea robusta*) tree, marked with the names of all the females in the village, whether married or unmarried, who have attained the age of twelve years, are planted in the water in the morning

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\* Sketches of Field Sports as followed by the Natives of India, 1822.



for the space of four hours and-a-half; and the withering of any of these branches is proof of witchcraft against the person whose name is annexed to it.

*Second.*—Small portions of rice enveloped in cloths, marked as above, are placed in a nest of white ants. The consumption of the rice in any of the bags establishes sorcery against the woman whose name it bears.

*Third.*—Lamps are lighted at night. Water is placed in cups made of leaves, and mustard-seed and oil are poured, drop by drop, into the water, whilst the name of each woman in the village is pronounced. The appearance of the shadow of any woman on the water, during the ceremony, proves her a witch.

80. A queer form of punishment is sometimes inflicted by the caste council when a Rāvulo (Oriya temple servant) ill-treats and deserts his wife. He is made to sit under one of the bamboo coops with which fish are caught, and his wife sits on the top of it. Five pots of water are then poured over the pair of them, in imitation of the caste custom of pouring five pots of water over a dead body before it is taken to the burning ground, the ceremony taking place in the part of the house where the corpse would be washed. The wife then throws away a ladle, and breaks a cooking-pot, just as she would have done had her husband really been dead, and further breaks her bangles, and tears off her necklace, as she would have done if she was really a widow. Having thus signified that her husband is dead to her, she goes straight off to her parents' house, and is free to marry again.\*

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\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

81. A Koraga woman of South Canara, when found guilty of adultery, is said to be treated in the following extraordinary way. If her paramour is of low caste similar to herself, he has to marry her. But, in order to purify her for the ceremony, he has to build a hut, and put the woman inside. It is then set on fire, and the woman escapes as best she can to another place where the same performance is gone through, and so on until she has been burnt out seven times. She is then considered once more an honest woman, and fit to be again married.

82. "Sometimes," a recent writer states "a big chain hangs suspended from a tree, and the village panchayats (tribunals) are held in the Aiyanar (or Sangali Karuppan) temple. The accused is made to submit to an ordeal in proof of his innocence. The ordeal consists in his swearing on the chain, which he is made to touch. He has such a dread for this procedure that, as soon as he touches the chain, he comes out with the truth, failure to speak the truth being punished by some calamity, which he believes will overtake him within a week. These chains are also suspended to the trees near the temples of village goddesses, and used by village panchayats to swear the accused in any trial before the panchayat."

83. *Gallows*.—In the Bellary Manual (1872) it is recorded that "that the hills through which the Otikanama ghāt passes, were till recently the haunt of some of the worst characters in the district, where they met to arrange their plans for gang robberies, and into the recesses of which they retreated with their plunder obtained from

the rich villages around. About thirty years ago, one of these gangs attacked a village on the Otikanama ghât, and, having looted it, set fire to a large hut in which some seventy women and children had taken refuge. Some of the ring-leaders were captured, and, after being executed, were hung up in chains near the scene of their crime, where their bones are still to be seen in the iron cages, in which they were suspended." In the jungles of Anantapur, about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the village of Bukkapatnam, is a gallows,\* said to have been erected by order of Sir Thomas Munro. The cross-beams and supports are made of teak, and the two iron cages suspended to the cross-beam by big iron hooks. Local people say that it was used only once, when the two ring-leaders of a band of dacoits, the terror of the neighbourhood, were bound, put alive into the cages, each of which is only just big enough to hold a man, and starved to death. The mode of torture had such an excellent effect on the rest that no more was heard of dacoity. On a stone near one of the gallows, an inscription in Telugu records that Hoosain Sahib and Badē Ibrahim Jemadar, were hung near Pasikallu, by order of the Foujdari Court, on September 8th, 1837, for killing a man by throwing a noose.

84. The manner of carrying out capital punishment in Malabar, in days gone by, was sometimes barbarous in the extreme. "Criminals," Mr. Logan writes,† "were cut in half and exposed on a cross-bar, in the manner still adopted with tigers and panthers slain in hunting

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\* Recently transferred to the Madras Museum.

† Malabar Manual, 1887.

expeditions, and offered as a sacrifice to local deities. Thieves were similarly cut in two and impaled on a stake, which probably had a cross-bar, as the word for it and that for an eagle or vulture are identical. But impaling alive was also known, and, in 1795, two Māppilas were thus treated after a pretended trial for alleged robbery in a Nayar's house. Finally, great criminals were at times wrapped up in green palm leaves, and torn asunder, probably by elephants."

85. The Civil Surgeon of Coimbatore, many years ago, mentions a case in which a subordinate official, to extort a confession, enveloped the limbs of a person in cotton soaked in oil, which he set fire to.\* Professional burglars, who wish to find out where valuables are concealed, even nowadays pour kerosine oil over those from whom they wish to extract the information, and threaten to set fire to it if they do not reveal their secret. A successful method of extorting a confession, which is still resorted to, is to keep on talking by relays to the suspect, and continue to ply him with the same question without ceasing both by day and night. Some years ago, in Malabar, a man was accused, and, being strongly suspected, was taken into nominal custody for the purpose of investigation. He gave several rambling and contradictory statements, so the police officer kept him on the march, with orders that he was not to be allowed to sleep until he revealed the truth. He was kept going from station to station for nearly four days, and finally he gave a full confession.

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\* Chevers. *Op. cit.*

From the collection of reports already referred to, I have gathered the following information relating to punishment and ordeal in bygone days in Malabar:—

1. If any Kurian detected another at night in an apartment with his wife or mistress, he was permitted to kill him, and cut off the woman's hair and repudiate her.

2. If any Kurian robbed the treasury, or anything else belonging to the Rāja, he was first to repay the value of what he had stolen, and sometimes had his hand or a finger cut off, or was put to death.

3. For various forms of petty larceny, the offender was confined and received corporal punishment. If proved guilty a second time, he was deprived of a member, and put to death with a sword for a further offence.

4. If a person committed theft, he was kept in confinement for six months or a year, and a little of his flesh or nose cut off.

5. If a Tiyan, Māppila, or other Kurian was accused of robbery or illicit cohabitation, and the charge was not clearly proved, those learned in the *shāstras* assembled with a court, and an iron hatchet was made red-hot. The accused, after declaring his innocence, had to take the hatchet in his hand, and, if the hand was burnt, he was pronounced guilty, and punished by amputation of a hand or finger, or with death.

6. If any one was convicted of a serious theft, he was put to death, unless he was a Brāhman, in which case he was excommunicated.

7. If the Rāja's Protikars levied more than their just dues, and extorted money from or otherwise oppressed

the people, the Rāja caused the offender to be seized and exposed to the public gaze on the high-road with his hands and feet in irons.

8. In the event of a personal quarrel between two persons, when the wounds were equal, the parties had to pay their own expenses until they were cured. But if only one of the parties was wounded, the other was ordered to pay the expenses of the wounded man till his wounds healed.

9. For adultery between a man of low caste and a woman of high caste, the man was put on the cahu, and the woman given by the Rāja as a slave to whom he pleased.

10. When a person committed murder, he was, before the death sentence was carried out, given rice or betel, or whatever he desired to eat. He was then put to death by "having his skull taken off by a scalping knife, the body to be fixed on the cahu, a pole fixed in the ground for the purpose." If the criminal escaped, and endeavours to catch him were ineffectual, his effects were secured, and the corpse of the deceased was burnt in his house. The practice of hanging criminals is said not to have been introduced till the time of Haider Ali.

11. Sometimes criminals were put to death by shooting. It is noted, for example, that, if a woman was caught by anyone in fornication, she was put to death with a sword or musket.

12. If a difference arose between two people meeting of principal men of the thirty thousand was convened, and they sometimes decreed that the plantain trees, betel vines, betel-nut and coconut trees in the garden of the

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guilty person should be cut down, other plants destroyed with a sword, and his house unroofed.

13. If, in a dispute, one man killed another, the principal men of the thirty thousand met at the fort of Valachereecota, and on entering the first house thereof turned their targets and sat thereon while they awaited the sentence of the oracle Paradēvada.

14. Any person wounding a Brāhman or a cow was, if blood was seen to issue from the wound, punished with death.

15. If a Brāhman killed a cow, he was excommunicated, or subjected to the expiation required by the shāstras.

16. If a Brāhman woman was ruined in character, she was excommunicated, and, the ceremonies of her obsequies having been performed, she was made over as a part of the property of Government.

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## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN VERNACULAR SCHOOLS.

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THE following account is based on notes supplied by native correspondents who have in their early youth witnessed some of the punitive methods here described. Many of the forms of punishment have been demonstrated to me, when in camp, by young and old, who were evidently giving a graphic description of what they had themselves seen or undergone. It is worthy of notice that, in many cases, the school-mates of the culprit took part in the administration of the punishment, as, in former days, every soldier of a regiment was made a public executioner in the punishment of running the gauntlet (or gantlope).

1. The teacher in vernacular schools, like members of his calling in other parts of the world, uses the rod, which is a rattan about a quarter of an inch thick and three feet in length, sometimes ornamented with a silver ferrule at each end. This, and the style used for writing on palm leaves, are the insignia of his profession. There is no restriction as to the parts of the body to which the rod is applied, but the palms of the hands, buttocks, and back are the most favourite spots. Caning is sometimes resorted to in lieu of a fine for bad conduct. Sometimes boys had to keep their buttocks uncovered during the whole time they were in school, so that they were ready for caning if they were naughty.



In addition to caning, the following forms of punishment are, or were, formerly inflicted.

2. Pulling and screwing the lobe or helix of the ears, or boxing the ears.

3. Hitting the head with the knuckles.

4. Slapping the cheeks, which may be done by the teacher, another boy in the class, or the culprit himself, if his previous conduct has been good.

5. Two naughty boys slap each other on the cheeks.

6. Pinching the fleshy parts of the body, more especially the thigh.

7. Putting some sand or powdered granite dust on the bare thigh, and pinching the part. In village schools the children are seated on the floor with sand spread out in front of them. They learn the alphabet by writing with the forefinger in the sand, which is always at hand as a punitive medium.

8. The boy stands with his feet together, and, crossing his arms in front, holds the lobe of his right ear with the left hand, and of his left ear with the right hand. He is then made to stoop down, and touch the ground with his elbows from ten to a hundred times according to the gravity of the offence.

9. Passing one hand under the leg, catching hold of the nose, and rising and sinking alternately.

10. A stick, four or five feet long, is passed under the knees, and the boy places his elbows beneath it. The thumbs and big toes are tied together by separate strings. Thus trussed, he is rolled away into a corner of the school-room, there to mediate on his fault,

11. The boy is converted into a horse, and made to carry about another boy seated on his back, with frequent turnings.

12. The arms are crossed so that the fingers of the right hand grasp the tip of the left ear, and *vice versa*. The boy then has to sit down and stand up alternately a number of times proportionate to the gravity of his offence.

13. There are some plants (nettles), the leaves of which, when rubbed into the skin, cause a burning and pricking sensation. The hands of the boy are tied in front, and the leaves applied to the back. The effect lasts for several hours, at the end of which time cocoanut oil is rubbed in to prevent swelling.

14. The boy is made to stoop, with only the big toe and forefinger of the right side touching the ground, and the whole weight of the body is thrown on the toe and forefinger. If the other toes and fingers touch the ground, they are rapped with the cane. This punishment is called standing on needles.

15. The right ankle being crossed over the left thigh, the boy has to stoop with the tip of the right forefinger touching the ground.

16. The boy stoops down with his legs stretched apart, and his right hand on the ground about three feet in front of him, while he reads a book held in the left hand.

17. Kneeling alternately on the right and left knee, while the ears are clutched with the hands of the crossed arms.

18. Standing or hopping on one leg.

19. Another form of punishment is known as sitting like a chair. In this the boy, with his hands tied or crossed in front, or stretched out at right angles to the trunk, is made to squat with his back touching a wall, and the buttocks on a level with the knees. Sometimes spiny fruits are placed in the hollow of the bent knee-joints. A line is drawn on the wall above his head, which must not be raised above the line. The steel style used for writing is fixed into the ground with its sharp-pointed end towards the buttocks. In a modified form of this subtle punishment, the school slates are piled up on the boy's lap or head.

20. The feet being several feet from a wall, the forehead is made to touch the wall, and, in this uncomfortable attitude, a book held in the hands is read.

21. The legs being stretched wide apart, the boy has to sit alternately on the right and left buttock.

22. The boy sits on the floor, with his clothes removed, and hands and feet tied. His face, body, and limbs, and the ground around him, are smeared with jagger water. Ants and other insects are attracted by this, and the skin becomes covered with them.

23. He is made to stand up with the arms crossed in front. His feet are then dragged apart, and he has to stand with the legs widely separated.

24. He has to crawl between the outstretched legs of the other pupils.

25. He is made to stoop down. A loop of string is passed round his neck and one of the big toes, or the

thumbs are tied to the toes. The punishment may be increased by placing a heavy stone or another boy on his back.

25A. As a punishment for bad handwriting, the boy is made to hold his right arm horizontally, bent as in the act of writing. Then any article which is at hand, such as a slate, piece of paper, or strip of palm-leaf (olei) is placed over the elbow-joint, and the boy has to write without letting the article fall off. If it does, he is caned, and the performance is repeated.

26. There is a species of red ant, which builds its nest in trees, and whose bite produces severe pain. A boy may be punished by scattering the live occupants of a nest over his body.

27. Hanging by the hands, or punishment of the bow. A rope or bar, which is sometimes bow-shaped, strong enough to bear the weight of the boy, is suspended like a trapeze from the roof, and clutched with interlocked or tied fingers. Burning paddy husk or chillies, sharp stones, thorns, or prickly-pear, are spread on the floor beneath him, so that he is afraid to let go his hold. To make this punishment more severe, it was sometimes combined with number 26.

28. If a boy wants to relieve nature, he is made to spit on a tile heated by exposure to the sun, and must return before the saliva, which takes the part of a sand-glass, has dried up.

29. The boy is made to masticate straw, like donkeys or bullocks.

30. He has to spit on the joints of the fingers, dip them in the sand, and strike them forcibly on a bench or stone.

31. If a boy refuses to do his lessons, another lad tells him that he will bring butter out of his thumb, the back of which he rubs with dry earth or sand till it begins to abrade the skin.

32. The boy is ordered to stand in the blazing sun with a weight, *e.g.*, a stone, on his head or in his hands; and, if he refuses to obey, receives a caning, or is pushed out of the room by the other boys. It may be noted that, as punishment for adultery, an unfaithful Yānādi woman is made to stand, with her legs tied, for a whole day in the sun, with a basket full of sand on her head.

33. Two naughty boys are made to seize each other by the ears, and stand up and sink down alternately, while they sing "You and I are shameless fellows."

34. The boy kneels down, and heavy stones are placed on his calves.

35. He is rolled in the sand during the hottest part of the day.

36. The block and chain (a variant of the bilboes). This consists of a block of heavy wood, sometimes shaped like an Indian club, to which is attached a strong iron chain four or five feet in length. The log may be placed on the back of the naughty boy, who has to read a book while in a stooping attitude; or the free end of the chain is fastened by a padlock to the leg of the boy, who has to drag or carry the block about with him, it may be for several days. This form of punishment is still practised

in the city of Madras, where a carpenter's apprentice was recently seen dragging after him a block, to which he was chained. It is resorted to by rural schoolmasters, carpenters and blacksmiths, parents and guardians. Some years ago a native of Madura, whose young wife was fond of gadding about, punished her by making her drag about a log chained and padlocked round her leg.

37. In the case of boys who shirk attendance at school, the teacher, accompanied by his pupils, proceeds to the house of the truant, and puts on his head a fool's-cap made of paper, bamboo, palm-leaf, or grass matting. He is then marched off, or carried by his fellow students to school amid the clapping of hands and beating of drums.

38. Two boys, who are guilty of chatting or quarrelling in the school-room, are made to stand face to face. They get a good grip of each other's ears, and tug thereat till their foreheads come in painful contact. If they are slow, the teacher seizes hold of their heads, and brings them forcibly together. As a variant, they may, while hanging on to the ears, be made to sit down and stand up alternately.

39. Boys are made to kneel down on the hard ground, sometimes with arms outstretched and a heavy stone in the hands, till they have learnt their lesson.

40. The introduction of benches into school-rooms has created a novel form of punishment. The boy lies flat on the bench, back upwards, and is tied to it by strings round the neck, waist, and legs. While he is thus captive, his arms are stretched out by two other boys, and he receives a caning.

41. The naughty boy is made to do menial services for the schoolmaster, such as drawing water from the well, etc.

42. The boy's parents, sister or other near relations, are spoken of, in his presence, in vulgar and abusive language.

Since the introduction of the Grant-in-aid Code the punishment of the young idea has undergone considerable modification. The old schoolmaster is, like Dominie Dobiensis, often loved and respected by his pupils, and there is a Tamil proverb that "the schoolmaster will attain the abode of Vishnu (*i.e.*, bliss), and the doctor will go to hell."

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## SLAVERY.

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IN a note on slavery, the Madras Census Commissioner, 1871, writes as follows. "In times prior to British rule, the whole of the Pariah community, without exception, were the slaves of the superior castes. The Pariahs were not the only slaves in these times, for almost all the inferior agricultural tribes were in a similar position. The Hindu law recognised five descriptions of service, four of which might be performed by any one without loss of dignity or caste, but the fifth order of service was to be preformed by slaves only, styled Dass, from their Dasyan or aboriginal descent. The 'undue service' to be exacted of the latter class included the sweeping and cleaning of the house, the doorway, the necessary and other impure places, and, in times of sickness, attendance upon the patient after the natural evacuations, and to take away the excrement, and rub the feet." There were fifteen species of slavery recognised :—

- (1) Those born of female slaves.
- (2) Those purchased for a price.
- (3) Those found by chance.
- (4) Slaves by descent.
- (5) Those fed and kept alive in famine times.
- (6) Those given up as a pledge for money borrowed.
- (7) Those binding themselves for money borrowed.
- (8) Those captured in battle.



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- (9) Those unable to pay gambling debts.
  - (10) Those becoming slaves of their own wish.
  - (11) Apostates from a religious life.
  - (12) Slaves for a limited period.
  - (13) Slaves for subsistence.
  - (14) Those who for love of slave women became slaves.
  - (15) By voluntary sale of liberty.

Of these fifteen descriptions of slaves, the first four could never obtain their liberty without the consent of their owners. The other kinds of slaves might obtain their freedom under stipulated conditions. Slave women, however, bearing sons to their masters, became free. People of any caste might sell themselves into slavery, or be made slaves by conquest, etc., but "the Brāhmin alone can never be a slave." "The Pallans," it is stated in the Tanjore Manual, "are prædial labourers, and are employed exclusively in the cultivation of lands. They have everywhere a separate spot allotted to them for residence, which is called Pallachêri, in distinction from that occupied by the Pareiya class, which is called Paraccheri. The Palla women expose their body above the waist—a distinctive mark of their primitive condition of slavery, of which, however, no trace now exists."

Of the history of slavery in Malabar, the following admirable account is given \* by Mr. W. Logan, who was for many years Collector of that district. "The question of slavery and the slave trade attracted the

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\* Malabar Manual.

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early attention of the Honourable Company's Government. In 1792, the year in which British rule commenced, a proclamation was issued against dealing in slaves. A person offering a slave for sale was considered to be a thief. The slave was to be forfeited, and the person offering him for sale was to be fined five times his value. The purchaser was to be similarly treated. The houses of suspected slave traders were to be well watched, and the traders caught *in flagrante delicto* were to be handed over to the Rājās to be dealt with. Fishermen and Māppillas conveying slaves were to be severely flogged, and fined at the rate of ten rupees each slave. Vessels used in trade (except fisher-boats) were to be confiscated. But the proclamation was not to prevent the privileged superior castes from purchasing the children of famine-stricken parents, on condition that the parents might repurchase their children on the advent of better times. This proclamation was chiefly directed against the prevalent practise of robbers carrying off by force the children of the most useful inhabitants, the Tiyaars and other cultivators. This practice was kept alive by the facility with which the slaves could be sold on the coast to the agents of vessels engaged in the trade, sailing from the French settlement at Mahé and the Dutch settlement at Cochin. These ships in general carried the slaves to the French islands. In 1819 the Principal Collector wrote a report on the condition of the Cherumar, and received orders that the practise of selling slaves for arrears of revenue be immediately discontinued. In 1821, the Court of Directors expressed

considerable dissatisfaction at the lack of precise information which had been vouchsafed to them, and said 'We are told that part of the cultivators are held as slaves : that they are attached to the soil and marketable property.' In 1836 the Government ordered the remission in the Collector's accounts of Rs. 927-13-0, which was the 'annual revenue' from slaves on the Government lands in Malabar, and the Government was at the same time 'pleased to accede to the recommendation in favour of emancipating the slaves on the Government lands in Malabar.' This freedom was not, however, to be proclaimed, and the measure was to be carried out in such a manner 'as not to create any unnecessary alarm or aversion to it on the part of other proprietors, or premature hopes of emancipation on that of other slaves.' This was a wise step on the part of Government, for it strengthened their hands in future years in recommending others to do as they had already done. But, at the same time, they need have been under no apprehension as to the effects of such an emancipation on the minds of other slaves. It is only people with *initial* ideas of liberty who fret under a system of compulsory customary employments. In 1841 Mr. E. B. Thomas, the Judge at Calicut, wrote in strong terms a letter to the Sadr Adālat, in which he pointed out that women in some talūks (divisions) fetched higher prices, in order to breed slaves ; that the average cost of a young male under ten years was about Rs. 3-8-0, of a female somewhat less ; that an infant ten months old was sold in a court auction for Rs. 1-10-6 independent of the price of its mother ; and that,

in a recent suit, the right to twenty-seven slaves was the 'sole matter of litigation, and was disposed of on its merits.' In a further letter Mr. Thomas pointed out that the slaves had increased in numbers from 144,000 in the census 1835 to 159,000 in the census 1842. It was apparently these letters which decided the Board of Directors to send out orders to legislate. And the Government of India passed Act V of 1843, of which the provisions were widely published throughout Malabar. The Collector explained to the Cherumar that it was in their interest, as well as their duty, to remain with their masters, if treated kindly. He proclaimed that 'the Government will not order a slave who is in the employ of an individual to forsake him and go to the service of another claimant; nor will the Government interfere with the slave's inclination as to where he wishes to work.' And again, 'Any person claiming a slave as janmam, k<sup>ā</sup>nam or panayam, the right of such claim or claims will not be investigated into at any one of the public offices or courts.' These measures received the cordial approval of the Court of Directors, who, in 1845, wrote as follows. 'It would defeat the very object in view to create any estrangement between them and their masters, and moreover would be an act of injustice and bad faith, of which the masters would be entitled to complain.' In 1852, and again in 1855, the fact that traffic in slaves still continued was brought to the notice of Government, but on full consideration no further measures for the emancipation of the Cherumar were deemed to be necessary. The Cherumar even yet have

not realised what public opinion in England would probably have forced down their throats fifty years ago, and there is reason to think that they are still, even now, with their full consent, bought and sold and hired out, although, of course, the transaction must be kept secret for fear of the penalties of the Penal Code, which came into force in 1862, and was the real final blow at slavery in India. The slaves, however, as a caste will never understand what real freedom means, until measures are adopted to give them indefeasible rights in the small orchards occupied by them as house sites."

Writing to me concerning Malabar at the present day, a correspondent states that "in almost every tāluk we have jungle tribes, who call themselves the 'men' of Jenmis.\* In the old days, when forests were sold, the inhabitants were actually entered in the contract as part of the effects, as, in former times, the landlord sold the *adscripti* or *ascripti glebæ* with the land. Now that is not done. However, the relationship exists to the following extent, according to what a Tahsildar (revenue official) tells me. The tribesmen roam about the forests at will, and each year select a place, which has lain fallow for five years or more for all kinds of cultivation. Sometimes they inform the Jenmi that they have done so, sometimes they do not. Then, at harvest time, the Jenmi, or his agent, goes up and takes his share of the produce. They never try to deceive the Jenmi. He is asked to settle their disputes, but these are rare. They never go

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\* Jenmi or Janmi. Proprietor or landlord.

to law. The Jenmi can call on them for labour, and they give it willingly. If badly treated, as they have been at times by encroaching plainsmen, they run off to another forest, and serve another Jenmi. At the Onam festival they come with gifts for the Jenmi, who stands them a feast. The relation between the jungle folk and the Jenmi shows the instinct in a primitive people to have a lord. There seems to be no gain in having a Jenmi. His protection is not needed, and he is hardly ever called in to interfere. If they refused to pay the Jenmi his dues, he would find it very hard to get them. Still they keep to him."

"Conversion to Muhammadanism," Mr. Logan writes, "has had a marked effect in freeing the slave caste in Malabar from their former burthens. By conversion a Cheruman obtains a distinct rise in the social scale, and, if he is in consequence bullied or beaten, the influence of the whole Muhammadan community comes to his aid." The same applies to the Nayādis, of whom some have escaped from their degraded position by conversion to Islam. In the scale of pollution the Nayādi holds the lowest place, and consequently labours under the greatest disadvantage, which is removed with his change of religion.

In the middle of last century, when planters first began to settle in the Wynād (in Malabar), they purchased the land with the Paniyans living on it, who were practically slaves of the land-owners. In some localities, where the Janmis have sold the bulk of the land, and have consequently ceased to find regular employment for

them, the Paniyans have taken kindly to working on coffee estates under European control.

In Wigram's 'Malabar Law and Custom,'\* the word *adima* is defined as "feudal dependency of a Nayar upon his patron : slavery." And the terms *adima* and *kūdima* are said to mean "a slave or one subject to the landlord, the grant (of land) being generally made to such persons. A nominal fee of about two fanams a year is payable to the landlord, to show that he still retains the proprietary title."

In his report on the forest administration in Coorg, 1902-03, Mr. C. McCarthy writes as follows concerning the jungle Kurumbas, who now work for the forest department. "We experienced, in connection with the Kurubas, one of those apparent aberrations of sense and intellect, the occurrence of which amongst this peculiar race was foreshadowed in the last report. The Chief Commissioner is aware that, in the interests of the Kurubas themselves, we substitute for a single cash payment distributions of the same value of food-grains, clothes and cash in equal proportions of each. Now, seventy years ago, before the annexation of Coorg, the Kurubas and similar castes were prædial slaves of the dominant Coorgs, receiving no other remuneration for service than food and clothing. In fact, this institution, nothing less than real slavery, was not entirely broken up until the great demand for local labour created by the opening up of the country for coffee cultivation so late as 1860-70, so that

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\* 2nd Ed. By L. Moore, 1900,

the existing generation are still cognisant of the old state of affairs. Last year, during the distribution of rewards for the successful protection of the reserves that season from fire, it seems that the idea was put into the heads of these people that our system of remuneration, which includes the distribution of food and clothing, was an attempt to create again at their expense a system of, as it were, forest slavery; with the result that for a time nothing would induce many of them to accept any form of remuneration for the work already performed, much less to undertake the same duties for the approaching season. It was some time, and after no little trouble, that the wherefore of this strange conduct was discovered, and the suspicions aroused put at rest."

In an article on the hill tribes of Travancore,\* Mr. Conner states that "in earlier times the murder of a slave was scarcely considered a crime. The deed of transfer goes to say 'You may sell or kill him or her.' The latter privilege has now of course ceased."

Of slavery on the west coast, an excellent account is given by the Rev. S. Mateer,† from which the following extracts are taken. "Every wealthy man, and even individuals of inferior caste, had a number of bondsmen born in slavery. The number of persons originally reduced to a state of slavery were increased by the sale of children in times of famine and distress, which has occurred even in our own day. Other additions have been made, from time to time, by petty princes

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\* Madras Journ. Lit. Science, I, 1833.

† Native Life in Travancore, 1833.



carrying away captives in their wars, by the fraud or violence of kidnappers, as a judgment on criminals, as a punishment on females of the higher classes who have fallen, and are cast out to associate with the lowest of the population. Muhammadans and Roman Catholics of property also purchased slaves, in order to proselytise them to their own religion. On account of the law of caste pollution, these slaves have all been engaged solely in prædial or field work, not domestic service, as they could not enter the houses of their masters, nor be used for personal attendance. Even in the fields, their work must be superintended from a certain distance. A curious custom existed, which is said to have added to the numbers of the enslaved. The various castes met at fighting grounds at Pallam, Ochira, etc., and at this season it was supposed that low-caste men were at liberty to seize high-caste women if they could manage it, and to retain them. A certain woman at Mundakayam, with fair Syrian features, is said to have been carried off thus. Hence arose a popular error that, during the months of February and March, if a Pulayan meets a Sūdra woman alone, he may seize her, unless she is accompanied by a Shānar boy. Gundert says that this time was in the month Karkadam (15th July to 15th August), during which high caste women may lose caste if a slave happens to throw a stone at them after sunset. The Pariahs in North Travancore formerly kidnapped females of high caste, whom they were said to treat afterwards in a brutal manner. Their custom was to turn robbers in the month of February, just after the ingathering of the

harvest, when they were free from field work, and at the same time excited by demon worship, dancing, and drink. They broke into the houses of Brāhmans and Nāyars, carrying away their children and property, in excuse for which they pretended motives of revenge, urging a tradition that they were once a division of the Brāhmans, but entrapped into a breach of caste rules by their enemies making them eat beef."

Concerning the Paraiyans of Travancore, the Rev. S. Mateer writes further\* that "during the war with Tippu, proclamation was made that every Paraiyan in this district must have a Nāyar or master, and belong to some one or other. All who were not private property would be made slaves of the sirkar (Government), which was greatly dreaded on account of the merciless oppression, and obliged to cut grass for the troops, and do other services. Many, therefore, became nominally slaves to some respectable man, asking it as a kindness to free them from Government slavery. This reminds us of the Roman clients and patrons. Several respectable families begged the Nambūri high priest, visiting Suchindram and other temples, to call them his slaves for which they paid him one fanam a head per annum. This payment is still kept up. This priest conferred upon them additional benefits, for in their troubles and oppressions he wrote to the Government, requiring for them justice and proper treatment. The slaves of a Nambūri would also be treated with consideration on account of his sacred position and rank. These families,

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\* Journ. Roy. As. Soc. XVI.

‘pōtty slaves,’ still intermarry only among themselves, as in this case the wife could not be claimed by a different owner from the husband’s.”

The following account of the social status of the leaf weaving Thanda Pulayans of Cochin is given by Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyer.\* “The Thanda Pulayans appear to have been the slaves of the soil till 1854, when they were emancipated. Even now their condition has not undergone any material improvement. Though they are left more to themselves, they still work for farmers or landlords for a daily wage of paddy. If they run away, they are brought back, and punished. There is even now a custom that, when a farmer or landlord wants a few Pulayans to work in the fields, he obtains their services on payment of fifteen to twenty rupees to them, or to their master. When a Pulayan’s services are thus obtained, he works for his new master for two edangalis of paddy a day. They can obtain their liberation on the return of the purchase money, which they can never hope to earn. Having no property which they can claim as their own, and conscious perhaps that their lot will be the same wherever they go, they remain cheerful and contented, drudging on from day to day, and have no inclination to emigrate to places where they can get higher wages. The Cherumans of Palghāt, on the contrary, enjoy more freedom. Many go to the Wynād, and some to the Kolar gold-fields, where they receive a good money-wage. The Thanda Pulayans, as has been said, work for some landlord, who allows them small bits of

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\* Monograph. Eth. Survey of Cochin.

land. The trees thereon belong to the master, but they are allowed to enjoy their produce during their residence there. When not required by the master, they can work where they like. They have to work for him for six months and sometimes throughout the year. They have little to do after the crop has been garnered. They work in the rice-fields, pumping water, erecting bunds (mud embankments), weeding, transplanting, and reaping. Men, women, and children may be seen working together. After a day's hard work in the sun or rain, they receive their wages, which they take to the nearest shop, called *mattupitica* (exchange shop), where they receive salt, chillies, etc., in exchange for a portion of the paddy, of which the remainder is cooked. The master's field must be guarded at night against the encroachment of cattle, and the depredations of thieves and wild beasts. They keep awake by shouting aloud, singing in a dull monotone, or beating a drum. Given a drink of toddy, the Pulayan will work for any length of time. It is not uncommon to see them thrashed for slight offences. If a man is thrashed with a *thanda* or leafy woman's garment, he is so much disgraced in the eyes of his fellowmen that he is not admitted into their society. Some improve their condition by becoming converts to Christianity. Others believe that the spirits of the departed would be displeased if they became Christians."

In a note on the Koragas and Holayas of South Canara,\* Mr. Ullal Raghavendra Rao writes as follows. "The destined slave is washed and anointed with oil, and

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\* Ind. Ant. III, 1874.

new clothes are given him. The master takes a plate, pours some water into it, and drops in a piece of gold. The slave drinks the water, takes some earth from his future master's estate, and throws it on such spot as he chooses for his use, which is then given over to him, with the trees thereon. Although these slaves are in a degraded condition, yet they appear to be by no means dejected or unhappy. A male slave gets three hanis of paddy or a hani and-a-half of rice daily, besides a small quantity of salt. The female slave gets two hanis of paddy or one hani of rice, and, if they be man and wife, they may easily sell a portion of their rice, and procure other necessaries. They are also allowed one cloth each every year, and besides, when transferred from one master to another, they get a cocoanut, a jack-tree and a spot in which they can sow a quarter or half a mura of paddy. The greater number of slaves belong to the *aliya santānam*\* castes, and, among these people, a male slave is sold for three Bhaudri pagodas;† and a female slave for five pagodas; whereas the few slaves who follow the *makkala santānam*‡ custom fetch five pagodas for the man, and only three pagodas for the woman. This is because the children of the latter go to the husband's master, while those of the *aliya santānam* slaves go to the mother's master, who also has the benefit of the husband's services. He has, however, to pay the expenses of their marriage, which amount to a pagoda and-a-half; and, in like manner, the master of the

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\* *Aliya santānam*. Inheritance in the female line.

† Pagoda. A gold coin, worth Rs. 3-8-0.

‡ *Makkala santānam*. Inheritance in the male line.

makkala santānam slave pays two pagodas for his marriage, and gets possession of the female slave and children. The master has the power of hiring out his slaves, for whose services he receives annually one mura of rice. They are also mortgaged for three or four pagodas.”

The following account of slavery among the Holayas of Mysore is taken from the Census report, 1891, where it is stated that “ in the malnād the Holaya degenerated into the agrestic slave, and till a few decades ago under the British rule, not only as regards his property but also with regard to his body, he was not his own master. The vargdār, or land-holder, owned him as a hereditary slave. The genius of British rule has emancipated him, and his enfranchisement has been emphasised by the allurements of the coffee industry with its free labour and higher wages . . . . The Holaya in the far west of the province still continues in many respects the bondsman of the local land-holder of influence, and some of the social customs now prevailing among the Holayas fully bear out this fact. In most of the purely malnād or hilly tālūks, each vargdār owns a set of servants styled Huttālu or Huttu-Alu and Mannālu or Mannu-Alu. The former is the hereditary servitor of the family, born in servitude, and performing agricultural work for the land-holder from father to son. The latter is a serf attached to the soil, and changes hands with it. These are usually of the Holaya class. In order to rivet the ties which bind these hereditary labourers to the soil, it is alleged that the local capitalists have improvised a kind

of Gretna Green marriage among them. A legal marriage of the orthodox type contains the risk of a female servant being lost to the family in case the husband happened not to be a Huttālu or Mannālu. So, in order to obviate the possible loss, a custom prevails, according to which a female Huttālu or Mannālu is espoused in what is locally known as the manikattu form, which is neither more nor less than licensed concubinage. She may be given up after a time, subject to a small fine to the caste, and anybody else may then espouse her on like conditions. Not only does she thus remain in the family, but her children will also become the landlord's servants."

Until recent years the Kottai Vellālas, who live within a mud fort at Srivaiguntam in the Tinnevely district, housed within the fort certain prædial slaves (kottar or smiths) of inferior social status. "These slaves," Mr. Boyle writes,\* "partly from the changed social atmosphere of the time, and partly from want of sufficient space within the fort, have within the last generation been turned out to live beyond the enclosure, but they still work for their hereditary masters at rates fixed far more by custom than the competition of the market."

In a note on the privileges of servile castes Mr. M. J. Walhouse writes † that "it is well known that the servile castes in Southern India once held far higher positions, and were indeed masters of the land on the arrival of the Brāhmanical race. Many curious vestiges of

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\* Ind. Ant. III, 1874,

† Ibid.

their ancient power still survive in the shape of certain privileges, which are jealously cherished, and, their origin being forgotten, are much misunderstood. These privileges are remarkable instances of survivals from an extinct state of society—shadows of long-departed supremacy, bearing witness to a period when the present haughty high-caste races were suppliants before the ancestors of degraded classes, whose touch is now regarded as pollution. At the bull-games (jellikattu) at Dindigul in the Madura district, which have some resemblance to Spanish bull-fights, and are very solemn celebrations, the Kallar, or robber caste, can alone officiate as priests, and consult the presiding deity. On this occasion they hold quite a Saturnalia of lordship and arrogance over the Brāhmans. In the great festival of Siva at Trivalūr in Tanjore, the head-man of the Parēyars is mounted on the elephant with the god, and carries his chauri. In Madras, at the annual festival of the goddess of the Black Town, when a tāli is tied round the neck of the idol in the name of the entire community, a Parēyan is chosen to represent the bridegroom. In Madras, too, the mercantile caste (Kōmatis), and in Vizagapatam the Brāhmans, had to go through the form of asking the consent of the lowest castes to their marriage, though the custom as now died out. At Mēlkote in Mysore, the chief seat of the followers of Rāmanuja Achārya, and at the Brāhman temple at Bēlur, the Holeyas or Parēyars have the right of entering the temple on three days in the year, specially set apart for them." At Mēlkote the Holeyas and Mādigas are said to have been granted the privilege of entering the *sanctum sanctorum*



along with Brāhmans and others on three days by Rāmanuja. In 1799, however, the right to enter the temple was stopped at the dhvaja-stambham, or consecrated monolithic column. Besides the privilege of entering the temple, the Holeyas and Mādigas have the right to drag the car. At both Bēlur and Mēlkote, as soon as the festival is over, the temples are ceremonially purified. It is said that the Brāhmans in Mysore consider that great luck will wait upon them, if they can manage to pass through the Holeyas quarter of a village unmolested, and that, should a Brāhman attempt to enter their quarters, they turn out in a body and slipper him, in former times, it is said to death.\*

Should a Brāhman venture into a parachēri (Paraiyan quarter), water with which cow-dung has been mixed, is thrown over his head, and he is driven out. Some Brāhmans consider an abandoned parachēri an auspicious site for an agrahāra (Brāhman quarter). At the festival of Gangamma at Palmanēr † a Paraiyan assists the Tsākali (washerman) pūjāri, and, during the period of the ceremonies, he is allowed to wear the sacred thread of the twice-born. ‡ “Paraiyans,” the Rev. A. C. Clayton writes, † “are allowed to take part in pulling the cars of the idols in the great festivals of Conjeevaram, Kumbakonam and Srivilliputtūr. Their touch is not reckoned to defile the ropes used, so that other Hindus will also pull with them. With this may be compared the fact that the Telugu Mālas are custodians of the

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\* J. S. F. Mackenzie, *Ind. Ant.*, II, 1873.

† *Manual of the North Arcot district.*

‡ *Madras Museum Bull.* V., 2, 1906.

goddess Gauri, the bull Nandi, and Ganēsa, the chief gods of the Saiva Kāpus and Baliyas." The Mālas of the Bellary district are considered to be the servants of the Banajigas (traders) for whom they act as caste messengers on the occasion of marriages and funerals. At marriages, six Mālas, selected from certain families, lead the procession carrying flags, etc., and sit in the verandah of the marriage house. At funerals a Māla carries the brass ladle bearing the insignia of the right hand section, which is the emblem of the authority of the Dēsai (head man of the section). At a Kamma funeral, when the corpse reaches a spot which is made to represent the temple of Arichandra, the bier is set down, and a Paraiyan or Māla repeats the following formula. "I am the first born (*i.e.*, the representative of the oldest caste). I wore the sacred thread at the outset. I am Sangu Paraiyan (or Reddi Māla). I was the patron of Arichandra. Lift the corpse, and turn it round with its head towards the smāsanam (burning-ground), and feet towards the house."

During the celebration of village festivals in some places, an unmarried Mādiga woman, called for the occasion Mātangi (a favourite deity), abuses and spits upon the people assembled, and they do not take this as an insult, because they think that her spittle removes the pollution. The woman is, indeed, regarded as the incarnation of the goddess herself. Similarly, the Mālas use very obscene language when the god is taken in procession to the streets of the caste people.\* In an exceedingly interesting account of the festival of the

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\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

village goddess Uramma, at Kudligi in the Bellary district, Mr. F. Fawcett writes as follows. "The Mādiga Basivis (dedicated prostitutes) are given alms, and join in the procession. A quantity of rice and rāgi (grain: *Eleusine Coracana*) flour is poured into a basket, over which one of the village servants cuts the throat of a small black ram. The carcase is laid on the bloody flour, and the whole covered with old cloths, and placed on the head of a Mādiga, who stands for some time in front of the goddess. The goddess is then carried a few yards, the Mādiga walking in front, while a hole is dug close to her, and the basket of bloody flour and the ram's carcase are buried. After some dancing by the Mādiga Basivis to the music of the tom-tom, the Mādigas bring five new pots, and worship them. A buffalo, devoted to the goddess after the last festival, is then driven or dragged through the village with shouting and tom-toming, walked round the temple, and beheaded by the Mādiga in front of the goddess. The head is placed in front of her, with the right foreleg in the mouth, and a lamp, lighted eight days previously, is placed on top. All then start in procession round the village, a Mādiga naked but for a few margosa leaves, and held by two others, leading the way. Behind him are all the other Mādigas, carrying six hundred seers of cholam (millet: *Sorghum*), which they scatter; and, following them, all the other villagers. . . . The Mādiga is said to be in mortal terror while leading the procession, for the spirit or influence of the goddess comes over him. He swoons before the procession is completed. At noon the people collect again at Uramma's temple, where a purchased buffalo is

sacrificed. The head is placed in front of the goddess as before, and removed at once for food. Then those of the lower Sūdra castes, and Mādigas who are under vows, come dressed in margosa leaves, with lamps on their heads, and sacrifice buffaloes, sheep, and goats to the goddess."

In an account of a village festival in the Cuddapah district, Bishop Whitehead informs us \* that "two buffaloes are brought by the Mādigas and Mālas. One of the Mālas, called the Asādi, chants the praises of the goddess during the ceremony. The animals are killed by a Mādiga, by cutting their throats with a knife, one being offered to Peddamma, and the other to Chinnamma. Some of the cholam is then taken in baskets, and put under the throats of the buffaloes till it is soaked with blood, and then put aside. A Mādiga then cuts off the heads of the buffaloes with a sword, and puts them before the idol. He also cuts off one of the forelegs of each, and puts it crosswise in the mouth. Some of the cholam is then put on the two heads, and two small earthen saucers put upon it. The stomachs are then cut open, and some of the fat taken out, melted, and put in each saucer with a lighted wick. A layer of fat is spread over the eyes and mouths of the two heads, some of the refuse of the stomach is mixed with the cholam soaked in blood, and a quantity of margosa leaves put over the cholam. The Asādi then takes some of the mixture, and sprinkles it round the shrine three times, saying *Kō bāli*, i.e., accept the sacrifice. Then the basket is given to another Māla, who asks permission from the village officials and ryots to sprinkle the cholam. He also asks that a lamb may be

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\* Madras Diocesan Record, April, 1905.

killed. The lamb is killed by a washerman, and the blood allowed to flow on to the cholam in the basket. The bowels of the lamb are taken out, and tied round the wrist of the Māla. A procession is formed, and other lambs are sacrificed during the course of it. Part of the flesh of one of the buffaloes, which have been sacrificed, is given to five Māla children, called Siddhulu, *i.e.*, holy or sinless; the rest is eaten by the Mālas."

At the chāl (furrow) ceremony in Malabar, "the master of the house, the cultivation agent, and Cherumars (agrestic slaves), assemble in the barn. A portion of the yard in front of the building is painted with rice-water, and a lighted bell-lamp is placed near at hand with some paddy and rice, and several cups made of the leaves of the kanniram (*Strychnos Nux-vomica*) as many cups as there are varieties of seed in the barn. Then, placing implicit faith in his gods and deceased ancestors, the master of the house opens the barn-door, followed by the Cheruman with a new painted basket containing the leaf-cups. The master then takes a handful of seed from a seed-basket, and fills one of the cups, and the cultivating agent, head Cheruman, and others who are interested in a good harvest, fill the cups till the seeds are exhausted. The basket, with the cups, is next taken to the decorated portion of the yard. A new ploughshare is fastened to a new plough, and a pair of cattle brought on to the scene. Plough, cattle, and basket are all painted with rice-water. A procession proceeds to the fields, on reaching which the head Cheruman lays down the basket, and makes a mound of earth with the spade. To this a little manure is added, and the master throws a handful of seed into it.

The cattle are then yoked, and one turn is ploughed by the head Cheruman. Inside this at least seven furrows are made, and the plough is dropped to the right. An offering is made to Ganapathi, and the master throws some seed into a furrow. Next the head Cheruman calls out "May the gods on high, and the deceased ancestors bless the seed which has been thrown broadcast, and the cattle which are let loose; the mother and children of the house, the master, and the slaves, may they also vouchsafe to us a good crop, good sunshine, and good harvest."\* At the ceremony in Malabar, when the transplantation of rice is completed, during which a goat is sacrificed to Mūni, the protector of cattle and field labourers, the officiating priest is generally the cultivation agent of the family, who is a Nāyar, or sometimes a Cheruman.†

By the Penal Code it is enacted that—

Whoever imports, exports, removes, buys, sells, or disposes of any person as a slave, or accepts, receives, or detains against his will any person as a slave, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to a fine.

Whoever habitually imports, exports, removes, buys, sells, traffics or deals in slaves, shall be punished with transportation for life, or with imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years, and shall be liable to a fine.

Whoever unlawfully compels any person to labour against the will of that person, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with a fine, or with both.

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\* C. Karunakara Menon, Madras Mus. Bull., V, 2, 1905.

† *Ibid.*

## MAKING FIRE BY FRICTION, FLINT AND STEEL.

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THE making of fire by friction with two pieces of wood is still extensively practised by the hill and jungle tribes, who live remote from weekly markets where lucifer matches are sold.

At the Meriah sacrifice in Ganjam, the flesh of the sacrificed victim, cut off by the villagers, was buried, and the bowels, lungs, liver, and other internal organs were cremated in a fire kindled with fire made by friction. Among the Nambūtiri Brāhmans, the sacred fire for sacrifices should be produced by the friction of two pieces of wood. And, during their marriage rites, fire is made with pieces of the wood of the jāk tree and pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*).\*

Fire is, in these advanced days, obtained by the Todas in their dwelling huts for domestic purposes from matches. The men who came to be operated on with my measuring instruments had no hesitation in asking for a match, and lighting the cheroots which were distributed among them, before they left the bungalow dining-room. Within the precincts of the dairy-temple the use of matches is strictly forbidden, and fire is kindled with the aid of two dry sticks of *Litsæa Wightiana*. Of these one, terminating in a blunt convex extremity is about 2' 3" long; the other, with a hemispherical cavity scooped

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\* F. Fawcett. Madras Mus. Bull., III, 1, 1900.

out close to one end, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in length. A little nick or slot is cut on the edge of the shorter stick, and connected with the hole in which the spindle stick is made to revolve. "In this slot the dust collects, and, remaining in an undisturbed heap, seemingly acts as a muffle to retain the friction-heat until it reaches a sufficiently high temperature, when the wood-powder becomes incandescent."\* Into the cavity in the short stick the end of the longer sticks fits, so as to allow of easy play. The smaller stick is placed on the ground, and held tight by firm pressure of the great toe applied to the end furthest from the cavity, into which a little finely powdered charcoal is inserted. The larger stick is then twisted vigorously, "like a chocolate muller" (Tylor), between the palms of the hands by two men, turn and turn about, until the charcoal begins to glow. Fire, thus made, is said to be used at the tiriēri (sacred mand or dwelling place), the dairy-houses of ordinary mands, and at the cremation of males. In an account of a Toda green funeral,† Mr. Walhouse notes that, "when the pile was completed, fire was obtained by rubbing two dry sticks together. This was done mysteriously and apart, for such a mode of obtaining fire is looked upon as something secret and sacred." At a Toda funeral (of a female), I provided a box of tändstickers for lighting the pyre. A fire-stick, which was in current use in a dairy, was polluted, and rendered useless, by the touch of my Brāhman assistant! It is recorded by Harkness that a Brāhman was not only

\* R. Bache. Royal Magazine, Aug. 1901.

† Ind. Ant. III, 1874.



refused admission to a Toda dairy, but actually driven away by some boys, who rushed out of it when they heard him approach. Like the Todas, the Nāyādis of Malabar produce fire with two sticks of *Listæa sebifera*, in the shorter of which a cavity is scooped out. They do not, like the Todas, put powdered charcoal into the cavity, but ignite a cotton rag by means of the red-hot wood dust produced by the friction. A very similar method is in vogue among the Yānādis of Nellore (plate XXVII). The cavity scooped out in the smaller stick is square instead of round. No charcoal powder is used, but a rag or dried leaves are set fire to. The sticks are obtained from the following trees:—*Protium caudatum*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, *Ficus*, *sq.*, *Stereospermum suberifolium*, and a tree belonging to the order Laurineæ. The Yānādis of Sriharikota make fire with dried twigs of the female *Cordia monoica*. The twigs of the male tree are said not to answer the purpose so well. I have seen a Kānikar of Travancore use as an impromptu twirling stick the blunt end of an arrow (plate XXVIII).

In making fire by friction, the Kotas of the Nilgiris employ three forms of apparatus:—(1) a vertical and horizontal stick with sockets and grooves, both made of twigs of *Rhodomyrtus tomentosus*; (2) a small piece of the root of *Salix tetrasperma* is spliced into a stick, which is rotated in a socket in a piece of the root of the same tree; (3) a small piece of the root of this tree, made tapering at each end with a knife or fragment of bottle glass, is firmly fixed in the wooden handle of a drill. A shallow cavity and groove are made in a block of the same wood,



Yanadis making Fire.





Kānikars making Fire.



and a few crystalline particles from the ground are dropped into the cavity. The block is placed on several layers of cotton cloth, on which chips of wood, broken up small by crushing them in the palm of the hand, are piled up round the block in the vicinity of the groove. The handle is, by means of a half cocoanut shell, pressed firmly down, and twisted between the palms, or rotated by means of a cord. The incandescent particles, falling on to the chips, ignite them. The Kota pūjāri must for all purposes, domestic or ceremonial, use fire made by friction, and he keeps a broken pot, in which fire should be constantly kept up. The other priest, called tērkāran or dēvādi, when he requires fire, takes it from the pūjāri.

By the Badagas of the Nilgiris fire is made by friction (niligolu or upright stick) at the annual fire-walking ceremony. The vertical stick is made of a twig of *Rhodomyrtus tomentosus*, which is rotated in a socket in a long thick piece of a branch of *Debregeasia velutina*, in which a row of sockets has been made. The rotation is produced by a cord passed several times round the vertical stick, of which each end is pulled alternately. The horizontal block is pressed firmly on the ground by the toes of a man, who presses a half cocoanut shell down on the top of the vertical stick, so as to force it down into the cavity (plate XXVIIIa). A Badaga, who failed in an attempt to demonstrate the making of fire by this method, gave as an excuse that he was under worldly pollution, from which he would be free at the time of the fire-walking rite. Though the Badagas make fire by friction, reference is made, in their folk legends, not to this method of obtaining fire, but to chakkamukki (flint

and steel), which is repeatedly mentioned in connection with cremation.

Concerning the making of fire by the Kurumbas of the Mysore forests, Mr. Theobald writes as follows. "They follow the same method as the Todas, but never use powdered charcoal in the cavity of the horizontal stick, which is held down by their feet or by a companion. The fine brown powder formed during the rotation of the longer vertical stick gives sufficient tinder, which soon ignites, and is placed on a small piece of cotton rag rolled loosely, and blown gently until it catches fire. The vertical stick is held between the palms, and has a reciprocal motion by the palms being moved in opposite directions, at the same time using a strong downward pressure, which naturally brings the palms to the bottom. They are then at once raised to their original position, and the operation is continued till the naturally formed tinder ignites."

The following description, by a native correspondent, of fire-making by the Pulayans of Travancore may be quoted as an example of the difficulties with which a Superintendent of Ethnography in India has to struggle. "They know how to make fire, *i.e.*, by friction of wood as well as stone, etc. They take a triangular cut of stone & 1 flat oblong size flat. They hit one another with the maintenance of coir or cotton, then fire sets immediately, & also by rubbing the 2 barks frequently with each other they make fire."

The Paniyans, who dwell at the base of the western ghâts in Malabar, make fire by what is known as the Malay or sawing method (plate XXIX). A portion of a

Plate XXVIII-A.



Badagas making Fire.







Panyans making Fire.



bamboo stem, about one foot in length, in which two nodes are included, is split longitudinally into two equal parts. On one half a sharp edge is cut with a knife. In the other a longitudinal slit is made through about two-thirds of its length, which is stuffed with a piece of cotton cloth. The latter is held firmly on the ground with its convex surface upwards, and the cutting edge drawn, with a gradually quickening sawing motion, rapidly to and fro across it by two men, until the cloth is ignited by the incandescent particles of wood in the groove cut by the sharp edge. The cloth is then blown with the lips into a blaze, and the tobacco or cooking fire can be lighted.

The following account of the sawing method of making fire, as carried out by a hill-man in Vizagapatam, is given by a correspondent of the *Indian Antiquary*. \* "He took a piece of dry bamboo, split in lengthways, and cut a notch on the convex side. He then tore a bit of rag from his cloth, and placed it on the ground under the notched bamboo, which he held tightly between his toes. He then got a bit of dry tamarind wood, and, cutting a knife-edge on it, shaped it to fit into the notch. He then rubbed this stick violently to and fro in the notch, until dust began to drop on the cloth. By and by the dust-laden cloth began to smoke, and, after perhaps two minutes, he took it up and blew the cloth into a flame."

By some tribes the fire-sticks are collected during the hot dry season, and stacked above the kitchen fire, so that, when the rainy season ensues, a stock of dry wood

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\* Vol. III, 1878.

for making fire is available. Every one familiar with life in India during the rains knows the state of temper produced by effects to light a cheroot from a box of matches made with red phosphorus. And the jungle man, with his more primitive but effective method, has the advantage over the cultured European.

Turning now to the use of the flint and steel. The Kādīrs of the Ánaimalai hills make fire by means of an iron bar, a piece of quartz as a strike-a-light, and the floss of the silk-cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*), over which powdered charcoal has been rubbed. The Irulas of Chingleput employ for this purpose a piece of the pithy stem of *Æschynomene aspera*, in the upper surface of which a small cavity is scooped out. Against the pith an angular fragment of quartz is held firmly, and, by means of a smart and dexterous blow thereon from a flat iron instrument hollowed out on one side to support the thumb, a spark is made to fall on the pith, which is blown into a blaze. A rather more elaborate apparatus is used by one of the jungle tribes of Travancore. The man carries in his tobacco and betel bag a little box made from a bamboo stem with a node as its bottom, which is stuffed with silk floss (*Bombax* ?), and also holds a piece of quartz, and a flat piece of iron. Fire is obtained, as in the previous case, by igniting the floss with a spark from the quartz. I could not but admire the skill of the expert tribesmen, who were amused at my efforts to strike a light, which only produced a maimed thumb. By the Chenchus of the Nallamalai hills the floss of *Eriodendron anfractuosum* is used instead of that of *Bombax*.

## FIRE-WALKING.

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*Moxque per arduentes stipulæ crepitanlis acervos,  
Trajicias celeri strenua membra pede.*

OVID. FASTI.

THE ceremonial observance of walking through hot ashes (*fête de feu*) is very widespread throughout Southern India. As a typical example thereof, an account\* may be given of the ceremony as it took place at St. Thomas' Mount, near the city of Madras, in 1901. The festival took place in connection with a small temple dedicated to the goddess Draupati, the polyandrous wife of the five Pāndavas, who, to prove her chastity during their absence in exile, submitted to the trial by ordeal of walking through fire. The celebration of the festival, it is believed, secures to the villagers their cattle and crops, and protection from dangers of all kinds. An individual who suffers from any chronic complaint makes a vow in the name of the goddess that, if he is cured, he will walk over fire. If he who takes the vow is poor, he must wait till a celebration takes place. But, if he is a man of means, he brings about the festival at his own cost. For ten days before the fire-walking special worship of the goddess was performed thrice daily. In the temple was recited the Māhābarata

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\* H. K. Beauchamp. *Wide World Magazine*; and *Madras Mail*, 1901.

in Tamil to hundreds of people gathered about the premises by a pūjāri (priest). And, every night, portions of the Māhābarata were acted in primitive village fashion to several hundred spectators. A day or two before the last day of the festival the vow-taker, after bathing, goes to the temple dressed in a saffron-dyed cloth, and gets the priest to tie a piece of saffron-dyed thread, with a bit of saffron attached to it, to his right hand (to the left in a woman). He sleeps in the temple at night, and is denied access to the interior of his house. The devotee observes a fast on the day of the fire-walking, and, early in the morning, goes to the temple, and worships the goddess along with others who have taken similar vows. They then bathe in a tank, to secure perfect cleanness of the body. Meanwhile, about midday, the temple servants heaped fuel on a permanent platform on an open space of ground. In this instance the fuel was a tōn of jungle wood, and two cart-loads of charcoal. The vow-takers returned from their bathing, and set fire to the fuel heaped on the platform. At the end of the platform a shallow trench had been dug, in which the wood and charcoal were burnt, until the whole was a mass of glowing embers. These were then raked out of the trench, and spread evenly to a depth of three or four inches over a space, some five yards square, marked out in the centre of the platform. The trench, when cleared of the embers, was partially filled with water, and all round the area of red-hot cinders water was freely sprinkled. An hour before the fire-walking, the vow-takers assembled near the platform with the priest, who.

to satisfy himself that all was right with the devotees, performed three tests, the first of which consisted of balancing a sword on its tip on the rim of an earthen pot. In the second test the priest put a few pieces of burning charcoal in a towel dipped in saffron-water, without the cloth being affected. The third and last test was that a few flowers and limes, thrown into the lap of the idol a few days before, had kept fresh. [In some villages round Madras the pūjāri used to place a few red hot cinders in the lap of the idol, and it was regarded as a bad sign if the cloth on which they were deposited became burnt. The falling of a flower from the wreath of the idol to the right was regarded as a good sign.] The procession of the goddess Draupati, followed by images of Krishna and Arjuna, started from the temple a little after 6 P.M. and wended its way through the dense crowd to the scene of the fire-walking ceremony. The idols were placed in front of the platform, and, after worship had been offered, the priest, decked with garlands and clad in a yellow cloth, walked over the embers with measured steps and quite calmly. The other devotees then rushed on to the platform, and walked over the glowing cinders to the other side, where they cooled their feet in a puddle of water (the pāl-kuli or milk pit). The glowing embers were loose, not beaten down or flattened in any way, and the feet of the fire-walkers, as they passed through, actually sank into the loose bed of fire. This was particularly noticeable in the case of the pūjāri during his calm and deliberate passage. Neither he, nor the devotees, lifted their feet high. They seemed rather to



wade through the embers, as through shallow water. The relations of the performers were waiting on the other side to receive them. These covered them with new cloths, gave them something to drink, and conducted them home. An interesting feature of the ceremony was that a boy about eight years old walked over the embers, while a still smaller child was hurried over, hanging on to its father's hand. A few performers, too, carried children across on their shoulders. One young man, who went through the ordeal, carrying a decorated pot on his head, took part in a cricket match on the following day. A few of those who took part in the ceremony were questioned whether they felt any pain, or whether they protected their feet by rubbing them with the juice of some plant. The suggestion was received with resentment, and considered profane. The most common explanation of the immunity from burning is that a decoction of the *Aloe indica* is used. It is said that the fleshy part of the leaves is bruised, and squeezed through flannel. A glutinous juice is thus extracted, not unlike castor-oil in consistency. This is rubbed into the skin of the feet, and palms of the hands. The hair, beard, and eyebrows are also thoroughly saturated with it. After a careful and thorough anointing, the devotee is able to pass over glowing embers without hurt. He is, it is said, even able to drag a red-hot chain through his hands, and to comb his hair and beard with a red-hot metal comb. Many of those assembled at the ceremony took away with them some of the sacred ashes, to be used as a charm to drive away devils and demons.

As showing the simple faith in the ceremony, the sad evidence, given at the inquest by the mother of a young man who died as the result of tumbling into the fire-pit, may be cited.\* “Pakkiri, who is lying here a corpse, is my son. He was attacked with jaundice, and I made a vow of treading fire for it. He got well. So he trod the fire last year and the year before. But this year his fate came upon him. I am blind of both eyes. I did not go with Pakkiri to the fire-treading. I went when I heard news that he had fallen into the fire and been burnt. I and my daughter carried him home. He died last night.” In commenting on this case, Mr. Andrew Lang says† that “Mr. Stokes explains that ‘the fire would hardly injure the tough skin of the sole of a labourer’s feet.’ Yet it killed a boy”! But it must be borne in mind that, both in this case and the one from Tinnevely quoted hereafter (p. 485), the individuals died as the result of severe burns on a part of the body where the skin is less thick than on the sole of the foot.

At a fire-walking ceremony in Mysore a few years ago, the devotees were clad in wet garments. The god having been carried thrice round the pit, the female devotees were conducted thereto, and several shovelfuls of the glowing embers thrown over their heads. The men walked over the ashes, and a quantity of ghī and milk was then poured over them. The priest then proclaimed that nobody could walk over the ashes without receiving hurt. The Abbé Dubois notes‡ that those, whose weak

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\* H. J. Stokes. *Ind. Ant.* II, 1873.

† *Magic and Religion*, 1901.

‡ *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*.

limbs do not permit of their running over the hot embers, cover the upper part of the body with a wet cloth, and, holding a chafing dish filled with burning coals, pour the contents over their heads. This feat is called the fire-bath.

Some Dombs in Vizagapatam are reputed to have been able to pour blazing oil over their bodies. And a Domb man is said to have had a miraculous power of hardening his skin, so that any one could have a free shot at him without hurting him. Some Dāsaris (religious mendicants) exhibit the Panda sērvai performance, which consists in affecting to be possessed by the spirit of a deity, and beating themselves all over the body with a flaming torch, after covering it probably with some protecting substance.\*

In Malabar a class of pseudo-Brāhmans derive their name of Tīyāttunni or Tīyādi (fire-play) from the ceremony of jumping through fire before temples. And, on the west coast, when celebrations are held in honour of Chāmundi, a much dreaded female divinity, the dancer who represents, and is supposed to be possessed by her, dances and rolls upon a pile of burning embers without any injury.†

At the annual fire-walking ceremony of the Badagas of the Nīlgiris, the local deity, in token of a vow to whom a long plait of hair is worn, is propitiated with a four-anna piece, a cocoanut, camphor, incense, and flowers. Prior to walking through the ashes, jasmine

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\* Manual of the N. Arcot district.

† M. J. Walhouse. Ind. Ant., VII, 1878.

or rhododendron flowers are thrown thereon, and, if the omens are favourable, is said not to be singed. So too, milk poured on the ashes is said not to produce a hissing noise. Fortified by their belief, in the goodwill of the god, they go through the ceremonial. And, if any one suffers hurt therefrom, he takes it as a proof of the displeasure of the deity. The Harava (jumper) sept of the Badagas is said to be so called from the rite, in which they leap over fire. It was noted by an eye-witness that "no preparation, or application of any anti-fire lotion was in evidence. The only suspicious fluid about was the cocoanut milk flooding the floor, in which all fire-walkers, as well as non-fire-walkers, trampled alike. I examined the feet of one of the men, and one of the women, who went through the ceremony, but, beyond black impressions on the soles, there was no marked injury." Sometimes the Badagas drive their cattle, which have recovered from sickness, over the burning embers in performance of a vow.

In a picturesque account of a ceremony of walking through fire at Nuagada (or Nuvagōde) in Ganjam, Mr. S. P. Rice writes as follows.\* "A holy man comes forth, a fire is kindled—no small fire of twigs, but a blaze of jungle faggots, the flames leaping up breast-high. Through this the inspired one walks unharmed, and proceeds to take his seat on a pile of sharp, strong thorns, raised about two feet from the ground, and woven in the form of a stool about two feet square.

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\* Occasional Notes on Native South Indian Life, 1901.

This is the crucial test. So lightly clad as to be almost naked, he takes his seat on the forbidding throne. If he is truly inspired, the thorns will break beneath him, or will be turned aside, powerless to pierce his divinely protected skin. But woe unto that man, into whom the true god has not entered ! Not for him will the thorns fall away harmless : he shall taste to the full the bitterness of his presumption." To Mr. J. G. D. Partridge I am indebted for the following account of the Ganjam ceremony, at which he was present as an eye-witness. "In the village of Nuvagōde, situated in the Surangi zamindary, a fire-walking ceremony is performed once a year, during the Dassara festival, by the priest of the temple of a village goddess. I arrived at this village on the morning of the 6th October, 1902, and saw the preparations that had been made for the ceremony, which was to take place that night. A pit, six to nine inches deep, and about nine feet long and four feet broad, had been dug in a field close to the temple, and was filled with the ashes of a wood fire, which had been burning during the day. Alongside this pit, and separated by about six inches, was another of the same size filled with embers. At 9 P.M. the Zamindar of Surangi sent word that the priest was about to begin, and that, before walking over the fire, he would sit on a seat of thorns, during which time he was endowed with prophetic powers. A most fantastic spectacle, which no European had perhaps ever been fortunate enough to witness, presented itself before me. The villagers, with several hundred people from the neighbourhood, all Uriyas

filled the street, and in the middle, to the sound of twenty drums and many horns, danced the priest of the goddess, a young man, with a bare sword in his right hand. He was dressed as a woman, with rows of silver bells round his waist, and a large head-dress covered with feathers. I had seen him in the morning in the little temple of the goddess called Koraisani, and should not have recognised him in the peculiar dress he now wore. He seemed perfectly frenzied, and leapt about. But he was well aware of everything that went on, as, in addition to his dancing, he acted as master of the ceremonies, rushing about in the crowd, talking to the Zamindar, and telling me when all was ready for his performances. The thorn seat was hanging like a swing from a small upright stand. The sticks were closely interlaced, and the thorns projected two or three inches from them. He placed a small cloth on the thorns, and then jumped into the seat, holding on to ropes at the sides, but allowing his whole weight to rest on the seat. When he had done this for several minutes, I found that the thorns had pierced the small cloth, but, as far as I could see, had not hurt the priest. His clothes were thin, and afforded no protection from the thorns. He constantly stupified himself by inhaling incense from a small censer, and I presume that he felt no pain in consequence of this. There were no signs of blood, however, on his body. He claimed no special powers, though his sensations must have been in some way deadened when he sat on the thorns. He did not invite any of the spectators to follow his example; and he would certainly

not have found any one anxious to imitate him. About this time he thought he could inform me of the contents of my pocket, but unfortunately his prophetic powers failed. He said I had one rupee and some gold, but I had five rupees and no gold. No other attempt was made to test his powers in this line. He next went to the fire-pits, which were a mass of red-hot ashes; sprinkled not more than a handful of incense on to them; dipped his feet in a mixture of rice-water and milk; and walked across one pit, leading another man. He then dipped his feet again in the fluid mixture, and returned by the other pit. The time he took in walking across one pit was not more than four seconds, and he took about four steps on the ashes. At least fifty persons in the crowd walked over the pits afterwards, but they went a little faster than the priest, and some of them only took two steps on the ashes. Their feet were not hurt, and they did not wash them in any mixture before or after they went over the ashes. I infer from the way in which the performance was conducted that any one can easily walk rapidly over the ashes, but that, if he goes like the priest, he must dip his feet in the mixture both before and after walking across them. The priest tried to convince a gentleman near me, who was rather sceptical, that it would not hurt him, if he walked over the ashes, but this person was quite satisfied with seeing others perform. The priest only walked once across the two pits, and he afterwards danced for an hour, when I thought it time to depart. The performance takes place every year."

An observant friend, who witnessed a fire-walking ceremony some years ago in one of the southern districts, informs me that nine-tenths of the performers were youngsters, who evidently did it for a lark.

In a note on a fire-walking festival in Travancore Mr. G. F. D'Penha writes as follows.\* "We could not see how hot the cinders were. But, judging from the look of them when we first arrived on the scene, and the length of time that elapsed before the ceremony took place, I should not think that the walking over the pathway was such a very hazardous operation after all. The previous market day we met a young man who was to go through the ceremony, and asked him why he did it. He told me he had been ill, and had promised the god that he would go through this performance if he recovered. He got better, and so was carrying out his part of the contract. This was, he said, the third year that he had done it."

To Mr. G. H. Bernays I am indebted for the following account of a fire-walking ceremony, which he witnessed at Sivakāsi in the Tinnevely district. "During the evening I saw a great glow in the sky, and thought that a fire must have occurred in Sivakāsi. About 9 P.M., I had to go to the bazār, to preserve order, as the Mohur-rum happened to be running concurrently with a Hindu procession. After the close of the latter I went round to the mosque about 11 P.M. In front of the mosque was a circular pit with a slightly raised wall about a foot high all round, and with an opening on the east and west.

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\* Ind. Ant., XXXI, 1902,



The pit, I should say, was roughly speaking about 1 foot or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep, and about 8 feet in diameter. In it a huge wood fire was blazing. It was the light of this, which I had seen from my bungalow some hours before. The flames were now allowed to die down until the pit was simply a mass of glowing red-hot ashes, the heat of which was so intense as to prevent one from going within three or four yards of the pit. Soon after a procession came out from the mosque, led by a venerable old man. They formed themselves round the pit, and the old priest, standing at the east end, recited various prayers, to which the others responded. Finally a man came out of the crowd, and, entering at the east end of the pit, walked through the glowing ashes. On arriving at the centre of the pit he halted, stooped down, and, gathering some of the ashes in his hands, threw them up in the air, and allowed them to fall in a red rain upon his naked body. He then walked slowly out at the other side. He was followed by several others, who all did the same with varying degrees of pace. Meantime the crowd kept up a continuous cry of "Dīn, Dīn." Finally a gōsha woman, with a child wrapped up, was brought forward and seated near the east end of the pit, while someone (I think it was the old priest) picked up handfuls of the glowing ashes, and poured them over her, and a man near by brushed them off the woman at once, to prevent her cloth from catching fire. After this ceremony the usual Mohurrum 'tamāsha' took place. It is difficult to note what struck me most, but it was perhaps a sense of mystic

weirdness which was given by the dull glow of the fire, the serried ring of faces lit only by a few torches, and the figure of the old priest chanting his prayers. I felt a sense of powerlessness in the presence of a rite which I did not understand, and I think, as I looked at the faces, I began to understand a little of the meaning of 'fanaticism.' As far as I saw, no preparation was applied to the feet or body of the fire-walkers, though it may have been done inside the mosque. None of them showed any signs of hurt afterwards." I have often, in former days, wondered at the casual manner in which road coolies walk, with bare feet, over the sharp angular fragments of crystalline rock, when making a macadam road; and experience in measuring native feet has taught me how non-ticklish their soles are.

At Gūgūdu in the Anantapur district, Mr. Francis writes,\* the Mohurrum is, strange to relate, entirely managed by the Hindus of the village, the Muhammadans taking but a small part in it. Hindus, to the number of several thousands, also come in for the ceremony from the adjoining villages. At the real Mohurrum, a pit is dug, and a bonfire made in it, round which lamentations over the death of Hussain and Hasan are made. In the Hindu's version of the ceremony, as at Gūgūdu, this item is developed into a regular fire-walking ceremony, which takes place twice, during the course of the Mohurrum, on the ninth and eleventh days. "First the musicians, who are Mangalas (barbers) by caste, walk through the fire, and then follow all sorts and

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\* Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

conditions of others, both Hindus and Muhammadans. The same thing on a smaller scale is done at the Mohurum at Mālyavantam. The Muhammadan Pirs at Gūgūdū are held in great veneration, and all castes, even Brāhmans it is said, make their vows to them, and distribute sugar to the poor if they are successful in obtaining the object of their desires."

It was noted some years ago, as a happy reform, by the Collector of Tanjore that, since Government set its face against the ancient practice, the people use flowers instead of fire, and tread on them devoutly in honour of the goddess.

As bearing on the subject of walking through fire, I may quote extracts from the selections from the records of the Madras Government, \* which show, *inter alia*, that the ceremony is not confined to the Hindu community. In summing up the reports received from the officials of the various districts, the Government expressed its opinion that "the ceremony of walking through fire is only of partial occurrence, and can scarcely be called a religious observance, being performed for the most part in fulfilment of vows voluntarily made. The practice does not appear to be acceptable to the higher classes."

*Madras.*—The observance is confined to the lowest orders of the people, and the same individuals exhibit annually, like any other class of jugglers; though there are some few, who go through the supposed ordeal in fulfilment of vows. —

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\* Reports on the swinging festival and the ceremony of walking through fire, 1854.

*Ganjam.*—It has been customary at Chicacole to perform this ceremony immediately after the hook-swinging festival, the same parties performing in both. The Muhammadans also, during the Mohurram, are in the habit of passing through the fire.

*North Arcot.*—On the last day of the festival, a shallow pit, half a foot deep, and several yards broad and long, is filled with firewood fully ignited. The only classes who take any part in the proceedings are some of the Sūdra classes, and, for the most part, those of the least consideration and of the least range of intelligence. The Brāhmins have no concern with them.

*Salem.*—The Hindus observe the ceremony on the last day of some of their festivals, and it is not unusual during the Mohurram for Muhammadans, in fulfilment of a vow, to leap in and out of the pits, in which they kindle bonfires opposite their ashoorkhānas (ten-day houses), while the embers are still burning.

*Tinnevely.*—During the celebration of the Mohurram in 1850, a Muhammadan fell accidentally into a fire-pit prepared for the ceremony of walking through, and died three days afterwards. It was reported that the accident occurred from the individual being under the influence of liquor. Since the occurrence of the accident the practice of lighting fires in pits during the Mohurram festival has been discontinued in that village.

*Godāvari.*—There is one class, viz., the Lingadharloo, by whom the fire treading is regarded as an efficacious observance for recovering their sanctity if by any chance they lose their lingam (the symbol of Śiva, which they

wear); but, even amongst them, it is not considered an essential ceremony.

*Nellore*.—In the month Madur (Jamad-ul-aval) the fakirs (Muhammadan) walk on, and roll in fires at two places at Nellore. This custom does not appear to be enjoined by their religion, but has been observed a long time in memory of their priest named Bundashaw Madar.

*Kistna*.—The devotee or devotees proceed to the temple or spot fixed upon with all the pomp and parade they can muster. They are excited by noisy music, and the recitation of stanzas descriptive of the attributes and miracles of the deity. Religious enthusiasm is roused to the highest pitch by the time the spot is reached, and the devotees run or hop over the coals as quickly as possible. It is said by some that the feet and legs are anointed with a preparation, which prevents the embers from affecting them. Sometimes the performers, or some of their followers, by way of making the ceremony more attractive and imposing, pierce their eyelids, tongues, the fleshy parts of their arms, etc., with narrow nails, to one or both ends of which cotton wicks are attached and ignited. Among the Muhammadans, the ceremony is sometimes observed, at the Mohurram, before the astanam or hall where the Pirs are installed and exhibited.

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## HOOK-SWINGING.

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IN summing up a series of reports on the swinging festival, the Government of Madras, in 1854, expressed the opinion that it "is on the whole less frequently observed now than formerly. In some few districts the practice is as prevalent as ever; in the majority, however, it is on the decline, while in none can it be called general. Further it does not seem to be in any way connected with the religion of the observers, but to be performed in fulfilment of vows. In some cases it would appear that the observance has led to loss of life. This would, of course, justify the interference of the magistracy, and, in future, any occurrence of this nature should lead to the prohibition of the ceremony in the village where it happened. The best method of discouraging this objectionable practice must be left to the discretion of the different magistrates, but the Governor in Council feels confident that, if it be properly explained that the object of Government is not to interfere with any religious observance of its subjects, but to abolish a cruel and revolting practice, the efforts of the magistracy will be willingly seconded by the influence of the great mass of the community, and more particularly of the wealthy and intelligent classes who do not seem to countenance or support the swinging ceremony."

From the Government records (1854) the following details are culled.\*

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\* Reports on the swinging festival, and ceremony of walking through fire, 1854.

In 1852 two men were killed during the celebration of the festival in the Salem district, in consequence of the pole from which they were suspended having accidentally snapped. In the Tanjore district the festival was known to have been practised in former years in a hundred and twenty-five towns and villages, and still took place occasionally in seventy-eight places. In the Nellore district swinging festival of the following nature were observed either annually or at intervals of two to thirty years:—

(1) Gaulaupooseedy, *i.e.*, a man hung to the end of a cross beam fixed on a post by the skin, etc., of his back with iron hooks.

(2) Gumpaseedy, *i.e.*, a man sitting in a basket, or on a plank hung to the end of the iron beam thereof.

(3) Pucaseedy, *i.e.*, iron hooks fixed in the sides of a man, who has to walk round a pagoda.

(4) Tallaseedy, *i.e.*, a man hung to a post by a rope tied to his waist.

In the Kistna district there had been no swinging for several years, but the custom was reintroduced by an old pensioned Hindu Subadar. It appeared that his father's sister performed *sutti* 70 or 80 years since, and a temple was erected to her memory on the site of her immolation, and in commemoration of the event a swinging festival was held annually. This had ceased for many years until the return of the old subadar, when, out of respect to the memory of his relative, he restored the temple, and re-established the swinging festival at his own expense. The Paraiyans were, it is stated, the principal performers

at the village swinging ceremonials, and they received from one to four rupees from a general fund subscribed by the villagers, or granted for the purpose by some public-spirited individual. In one report it is mentioned that, on the party who had been accustomed to pay the swingers having left, the villagers, afraid lest a discontinuance of the practice should be productive of calamity, took to swinging sheep and pumpkins, a much more reasonable exhibition of devotion. In cases of famine, cholera, or other calamity, a swinging festival was held for the purpose of propitiating the deity, and, the same time, a slaughter of goats, sheep, pigs, fowls, and even male buffaloes took place. In the Canara district, on the occasion of a very extensive celebration, the swinging was combined with an extensive slaughter of animals. The pole was erected in the close vicinity of a high heap of reeking heads. All the men, women and children were in holiday attire, and hundreds of the latter were brought close to the heap of heads, and showed intense excitement and enjoyment in witnessing the struggles of the dying animals, or in hearing their shrieks.

In front of the Mariamma temple at Mūdabiduri in South Canara stands a quadrangular stone, which is hollowed out at the top. It was formerly used as a receptacle for a wooden beam, on which another beam was made to revolve at the hook-swinging festival. The necessary wooden implements are still preserved near the temple.\* The apparatus for hook-swinging still lies outside the Periyapalayam temple near Madras.

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\* E. Hultzsch, Government Epigraphist. Annual Report, 1900-01.



Of this barbarous ceremony, as carried out at the latter end of the eighteenth century, an interesting account is given by Sonnerat,\* who thus describes it. "Those who imagine they have received great benefits from Mariatale, or wish to obtain them, make a vow to suspend themselves in the air. This ceremony consists in passing two iron tenter-hooks, tied to the end of a very long lever, through the skin of the votary's back. This lever is placed at the top of a mast twenty feet high. As soon as the votary is hung on the hooks, they press the other end of the lever, and lift him up in the air. In this state they turn him round as often as he chooses. He commonly has a sword and shield in his hands, and makes the motions of a man who is fighting. He must appear cheerful, whatever pain he may feel : for, if tears escape him, he is driven from his caste, but this seldom happens. The votary who is to be hung up drinks some intoxicating liquor, which makes him almost insensible, and looks upon this dangerous preparation as a pastime. After turning him several times round, they take him off, and he is soon cured of his wounds. The quickness of the cure passes for a miracle in the eyes of the zealots of this goddess. The Brahmans do not assist at this ceremony, which they despise. The worshippers of Mariatale are of the lowest castes."

In the early part of the last century Mr. Elijah Hoole was present as an eye-witness of a hook-swinging ceremony at Royapettah in the city of Madras, of which he

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\* Voyage to the East Indies and China, 1774 and 1781.

gave the following graphic description.\* “ A pole, thirty or forty feet high, was planted in the ground perpendicularly, having an iron pivot on the top, on which rested the middle of an horizontal yard or cross pole, which might also be about forty feet in length. This latter was managed by a rope attached to one end, reaching down to the ground, by means of which it could be made to turn upon the centre as fast as the people could run. Near the other end of the cross-pole, attached to a short rope, were two bright iron hooks, and at the extreme end was a short rope, about the length of that to which the hooks were attached. By slackening the rope for the management of the cross pole, the other end, to which the hooks were attached, was lowered to a platform higher than the heads of the assembled multitude, from whence, when it was raised, was borne into the mid-air a man, with no other dress than a waist cloth, and supported only by the muscles and flesh of the middle of the back, into which were thrust the iron hooks. When the cross pole, thus laden, had regained its horizontal position, it was turned quickly on the pivot, by the persons holding the rope at the other end moving round with it at a good pace. It was impossible to look at the deluded votary of superstition thus painfully suspended without a sickening horror, not merely from an idea of the agonies endured by him, but also from a fear lest the flesh should tear by his weight, and that, falling from a height which would ensure his destruction, he should, by death, complete the sacrifice thus offered to the infernal gods.

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\* Personal narrative of a mission to the South of India, 1820 to 1828.

The rising of the flesh taken up by the hooks seemed to threaten such a catastrophe, and the short rope at the extremity of the pole, being within reach of the person suspended, was perhaps intended to afford, in such a case, some chance of safety. Some of the persons thus suspended appeared fearful of falling, and held constantly by the rope, as, by this means, they perhaps hoped to relieve themselves of some degree of the pain which must be endured. Others, more bold and hardy, made no use of the rope, and, as though happy as well as fearless, thrust their hands into their cloth, and, taking out a profusion of flowers, provided for the occasion, showered them abroad amongst the people, who struggled to catch and preserve them as though they had been blessings from heaven. One fellow, by way of additional bravado, fired a pistol, which he had stuck in his waist for the purpose.\* I never pressed through the assembled crowds near enough to see the hooks put into the flesh, but was told that the only means used to deaden the pain was a smart blow, given with the open hand, on that side of the back into which the hook was to be inserted. From the indifference with which they mingled with the crowd after the ceremony, and the smallness of the streams of blood I have seen trickling from the wounds, I should suppose that a less quantity of blood than would be imagined is lost by the devotees. I think I have seen five or six persons swing in one day. Swinging is neither practised nor sanctioned by the Brāhmans; at least they have disavowed it to me; and

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\* Sometimes the suspended man would blow a trumpet, or sing a song.

Plate XXX.



Hook-swinging.



I never observed any besides the lower classes of the Hindus conducting or participating in the ceremony. It is said to be observed in consequence of vows made in time of sickness or danger, in expiation of an offence, or for the obtaining of children or some other desired object."

"Hook-swinging," the Rev. Mr. Phillips writes,\* "is performed after the consent of the goddess is obtained. If a lizard is heard chirping at the right side, it is regarded as a sign of her consent." It is believed that the man who is swung suffers no pain if the cause is a good one, but excruciating agony if it is a bad one.

It was, Moor tells us,† customary for a man to swing in performance of a vow, if he married a certain girl within a certain time. And a person might swing by proxy. He was told of a venerable dame, who came on behalf of her daughter, who had vowed to swing if the child, with which she was pregnant, was a boy. The damsel had been delivered only a short time before the arrival of swinging day, and the old lady went through the ceremony for the young woman in the straw with great resolution, and to the satisfaction of the assembled throng.

In a recent note‡ on the Izhuvas of the Cochin State, Mr. J. K. Anantha Krishna Iyer states that "there are two kinds of hook-swinging, namely Garuda (Brāhminy kite swinging) and thoni tukkam (boat swinging). [The Brāhminy kite, *Haliastur indus*, is the vehicle of Vishnu,

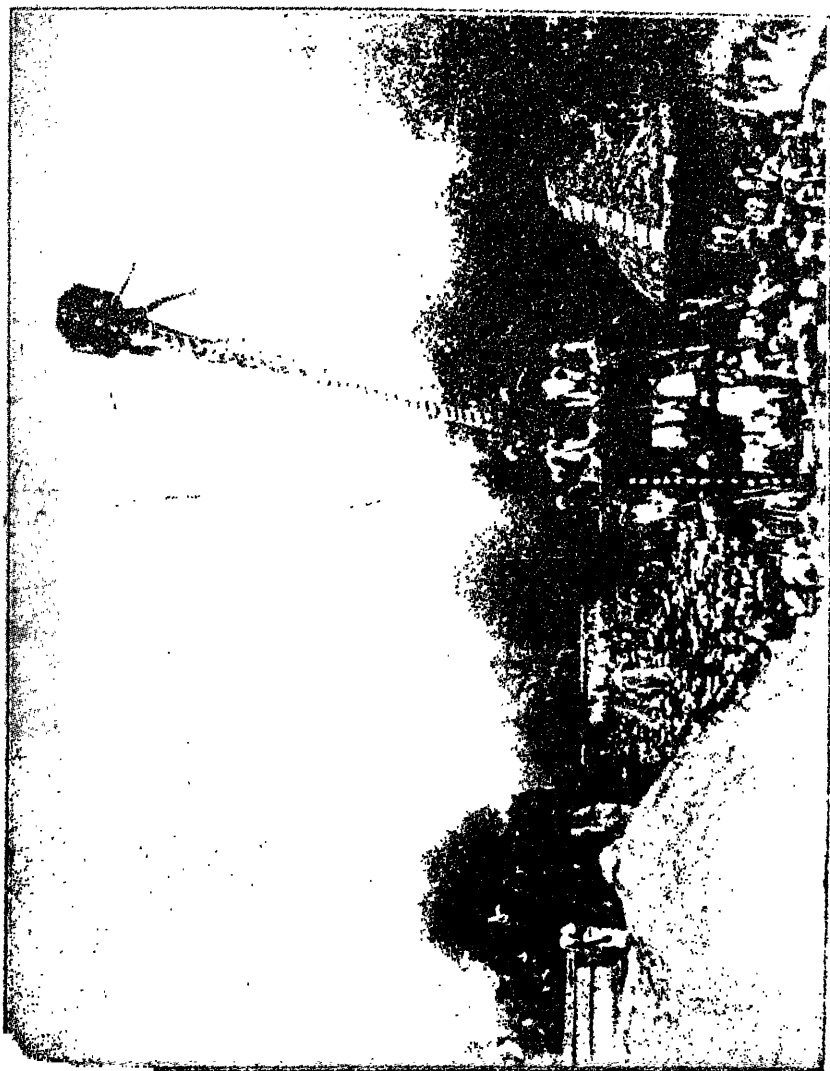
\* Evolution of Hinduism, 1903.

† Narrative of Little's Detachment, 1794.

‡ Monograph Eth. Survey of Cochin.

who is represented in temples as a winged human being.] The ceremony is performed in fulfilment of a vow, to obtain some favour from the deity Kāli. In the fight between Kāli and the demon Darika, the latter was completely defeated, and the former, biting him on the back, drank his blood to gratify her feelings of animosity. Hook-swinging symbolises this incident, and the blood shed by the insertion of the hook through the flesh is intended as an offering to the goddess. The performer of the ceremony should bathe early in the morning, and be in a state of preparation for a year or forty-one days by worshipping Bhagavāti. He should strictly abstain from meat, intoxicating liquors, and association with women. During the morning hours he dresses himself in a garment tucked into the waist band, rubs his body with oil, and is shampooed particularly on the back, into which the hooks will be inserted. He is also taught by his instructor to perform various feats and gesticulations called payitta. This he continues till the festival. In kite-swinging, a kind of car resting on two axles with four wheels is used. On it there is a horizontal beam resting on two vertical supports. A strong rope tied to a ring attached to the beam is connected with the hook, which passes through the flesh of the back. Over the beam there is a kutaram (tent) tastefully decorated, inside which two or three persons can swing at a time. In some places there is a different arrangement, and, instead of the beam and supports, there is a small pole, on which rests a horizontal beam provided with a metal ring at one end. The beam acts as a lever, so that one end of it can be lowered to give some rest to the swinger.

Plate XXXI.



Hook-swinging.





The rope tied to the ring is connected with the hook and the waste-band. For boat-swinging the same kind of vehicle, but without wheels, is in use. For kite-swinging the performer has his face painted green, and he puts on an artificial beak and wings like those of the kite. He wears long locks of hair like those of an actor in a *kathakali* (Malabar drama). Various feats are performed to the accompaniment of musical instruments, and, as he swings, the car is dragged three, five, seven, nine, or eleven times round the temple. In boat-swinging the performer puts on the same kind of dress, without the beak and wings. Sometimes pillayeduthu thukkam, or swinging with a child in performance of a vow, is performed. The child is handed over to the swinger, who carries it as he swings. The swinging ceremony is performed by Nāyars, Kammālars, Kuruppan, and Izhuvas.

Of the ceremony as performed in recent years at the Kollangodu temple in Travancore, an excellent account is given by the Rev. T. Knowles,\* from which the following précis has been compiled. In front of the temple was a booth containing the image of the goddess Bhadrā Kālī, a cruel deity, who is supposed to delight in blood. At a little distance was the car. The bottom part of this was very much like a lorry used when transporting large logs of timber by means of elephants. There were four solid wheels of thick timber, with a framework, like a railway waggon on a small scale. To this were attached two thick cable ropes. Joined to the sides of the car

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\* *Wide World Magazine*, September, 1899.

were two upright posts, about 15 feet high, strengthened with stays and cross-pieces. On the top was a piece of thick timber with a hole in it, and the bottom rounded, which fitted into a cross-piece, and allowed the long beam on which the men were swung to move up or down. This beam was some 35 or 40 feet long, and about 9 inches in diameter. It was placed through the hole in the piece of timber on the top of the upright frame, and balanced in the middle like a huge see-saw. At one end of the pole was a covered canopy, and at the other long ropes were fastened, which trailed on the ground. The whole arrangement of the car was such that, by lowering one end of the long beam to the ground, and fastening a man to it, and then pulling down the other end by the ropes, the man could be raised into the air a height of some 40 feet or more. The whole car could then be dragged by the thick cable ropes round the temple. While the subject was being prepared for swinging, a mat was stretched above his head, partly to do him honour, partly to protect him from the sun. His head and neck were richly ornamented, and below he was bedecked with peacock's feathers, and clad in a loin-cloth, which would bear some, if not all the weight of his body. Amid the firing of mortars, beating of tom-toms, the screeching of flutes, and the shouts of the crowd, the canopied end of the long beam was lowered, and the devotee, lying prone on the ground, was fastened to the beam by means of ropes passing under his arms and around his chest. To some of the ropes hooks were fastened. The priests took hold of the fleshy part of the man's back, squeezed up the flesh and put some four hooks at least through it. A rudely

fashioned sword and shield were then given to the man, and he was swung up into the air, waving the sword and shield, and making convulsive movements. Slowly the people dragged the car round the temple, a distance not quite as far as round St. Paul's cathedral. Some of the men were suspended while the car was dragged round three or four times. The next devotee was fastened in the same way to the beam, but, instead of a sword and shield, the priests gave him an infant in his arms, and devotee and infant were swung up in the air, and the car dragged round the temple as before. Some children were brought forward, whose parents had made vows about them. The little ones were made to prostrate themselves before the image of Kâli. Then the fleshy parts of their sides were pinched up, and some wires put through. This done, the wires were placed in the hands of the relatives, and the children were led round and round the temple, as though in leading strings. It is on record that, when the devotee has been specially zealous, the whole machine has been moved to a considerable distance while he was suspended from it, to the admiration of the gaping multitudes."

At Madura, Mr. Knowles states, on the occasion of a hook-swinging festival a few years ago, the devotee was swung by hooks alone, and not by ropes and hooks. The pole was longer than that used at Kollangōdu, and decorated with coloured cloth something like a barber's pole, and garlanded with flowers. Instead of it being fixed on a car, a large platform was used. The fleshy part of the man's back was first beaten to cause it to swell, and two large hooks were fastened into the flesh.

The Abbé Dubois,\* in describing the hook-swinging ceremony, says that "a priest beats the fleshy part of the back until it is quite benumbed. While suspended, the devotee is careful not to show any sign of pain; indeed he continues to laugh, jest, and gesticulate, like a buffoon in order to amuse the spectators, who applaud and shout with laughter. After swinging in the air for the prescribed time, the victim is let down, and, as soon as his wounds are dressed, he returns home in triumph."

Some years ago, a man in a village, north of the Godāvāri river, who had four holes in his loins from previous swingings, complained to the Deputy Commissioner that his occupation was gone, as he was no longer allowed to be swung. Quite recently the Governor of Madras was approached by a r̥yot (agriculturist), on behalf of the community, with a request for permission to revive the practice of hook-swinging in a certain village of the Madura district. He represented, with all earnestness, that, since this ceremony had been stopped, the rainfall had been deficient and the crops scanty; cholera had been prevalent; and in families where there were five or six children ten years ago, there were now only two or three.

A variant of the form of hook-swinging dealt with above is described by Tavernier, who, writing in the seventeenth century, narrates how devotees "go out of the city and fasten iron hooks to the boughs of several trees. Then come a great number of poor people, and hang themselves, some by the sides, some by the brawn

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\* Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies.



Sidi Viranna.

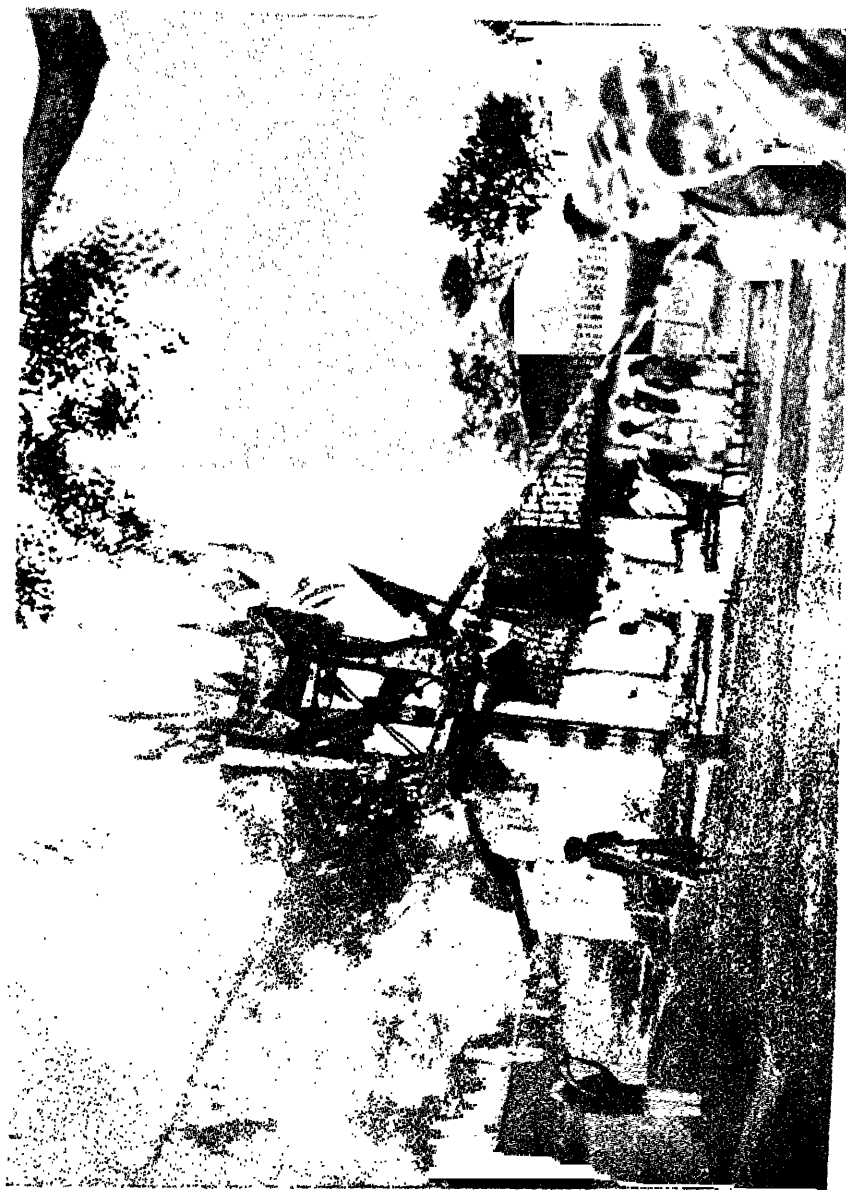


of their backs, upon these hooks, until, the weight of their body tearing away the flesh, they fall of themselves. 'Tis a wonderful thing to see that not so much as one drop of blood should issue from the wounded flesh, nor that any of the flesh should be left upon the hooks; besides that in two days they are perfectly cured by such plasters as their Brāhmans give them."

A ceremony which is closely allied to hook-swinging is the *tūkkam* (lifting), which takes place during the *kumbhum kodum* or pot festival in Travancore, for the following account of which I am indebted to the Madras Mail, 1902. On a wooden platform is an upright frame, on which is a transverse bar, both ends of which can be raised or lowered at will. Facing the temple there were three such platforms, and each of them was occupied by a man who performed the *tūkkam* ceremony. He was fitted with a head gear resembling an old poke-bonnet. From the rim were suspended slender threads of coloured beads and tinsel. On his shoulders rested a pair of wooden epaulettes, which looked gilded. His costume was turkey red and black, and from the waist downwards he was covered with a skirt of peacock's feathers. Under his arms ran a leather band, by which, when the transverse bar was raised, he hung in mid-air. Behind the band were two steel hooks, which pierced the skin very slightly. In his hands each man held a bow and what seemed to be an arrow, and from time to time he shouted and gesticulated in an alarming manner. There was a distinct military air about the dress and demeanour of the men.



As human hook-swinging is forbidden, a pseudo-ceremony has been substituted for it, and was recently performed for my special edification at Chennapatna in the Mysore province. The nature of the apparatus which is erected for the occasion, and decorated with coloured cloths, flags, and leafy twigs of the mango tree, is rendered clear by reference to plate XXXIII, which shows Sidi Vīranna suspended on high, and Māriamma in her shrine carried above its bearer's head. To the top of the framework a brass umbrella and kalasam (brass pot) are affixed. The end of the beam to which the figure of Sidi Vīranna (plate XXXII) is suspended, is adorned with a canopy with mango leaves tied to it. The goddess Māriamma in her shrine, borne by a pūjāri, and Sidi Vīranna carried by a boy, are conducted to a tank where they are worshipped, and brought in procession to the scene of the swinging ceremony. To a long beam, which is lowered to the ground, Sidi Vīranna, carrying in his hands a sword and shield, and dressed up in a gaudy turban and silk-bordered cloth, is secured by means of a rope made of human hair, which is tied to a hook in the middle of his back. The beam is then hoisted on high, and Sidi Vīranna rotated round and round, accompanied by the goddess Māriamma, and Holeyā musicians playing weird music with fife and drum. Sometimes a cradle is tied to the beam beneath the canopy, and children are placed in it. And occasionally men, tied to the beam by ropes passed round the waist, are hoisted. The festival usually commences on a Tuesday, and lasts for three days. On the first day the



Pseudo-Hook-swinging.



goddess Māriamma is worshipped by Brāhmans only, and on the following day by other castes, who make offerings of fowls and sheep. The swinging of the god is carried on for several hours. At its conclusion, the goddess is taken in procession through the streets, and, when the temple is reached, a fire-walking ceremony, called *konda*, takes place. Over the hot embers strewn in front of the temple, the *pūjāri*, with the goddess, walks three times, and enters the temple. It is said that he receives no injury to his feet, if he fasts and keeps himself pure on the day of the ordeal.

At a roadside hamlet near Kumulam in the South Arcot district, my assistant saw a pseudo-hook-swinging ceremony being performed. The beam had a sheep tied to it, as a substitute for a human being. One family had taken a vow to tie their child to the beam for one revolution thereof, but the police intervened, and the child's clothes and a sheep were swung instead. At a pseudo-hook-swinging ceremony in the Bellary district, as carried out at the present day, a Bēdar is suspended by a cloth passing under his arms. The Mādigas always swing him, and have to provide the hide ropes which are used.\*

I am indebted to Messrs. Wiele & Klein for the photographs illustrating the human hook-swinging ceremony.

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\* Manual of the Bellary district.

## INFANTICIDE.

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THE sacrifice of infant life may, so far as Southern India is concerned, be classified under two heads: (*a*) criminal offence as a means of getting rid of inconvenient offspring, or as an act of revenge; (*b*) tribal custom. The Abbé Dubois \* notes that parents used to abandon on a high road innocent babies, who happened to be born on a certain day, which the prognostications of the professional astrologer had signified to be unlucky. And there were even unnatural parents who went the length of strangling or drowning these tiny victims of stupid and atrocious superstition. A few years ago a newly-born baby was found dead in a ditch, and one of a gang of Basavis (dedicated prostitutes), working at a neighbouring factory, was suspected of being the mother. The police officer announced his intention of examining all the Basavis, and she who was in a state of lactation, with no baby to account for her condition, would be charged with knowledge of the infant's death. Of infanticide as an unauthorised act of mercy by the Irulas of the Nilgiris, the following account is given by Harkness.† During the winter, or while they are wandering about the forests in search of food, driven by hunger, the families or parties separate one from another. On these occasions

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\* Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies.

† Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherry hills, 1832.

the women and young children are often left alone, and the mother, having no longer any nourishment for her infant, anticipates its final misery by burying it alive. The account was given and corroborated in such a manner as to leave no doubt of its correctness.

It is stated by Orme, on the authority of the Jesuit Father Martin, that the fury of revenge operates so strongly among the 'Colleries' (Kallans) that a man, for a slight affront, has been known to murder his wife and all his children, merely to have the atrocious satisfaction of compelling his adversary to commit like murders in his own family. The former practice of infanticide by the Kallans is dealt with at greater length in the Manual of the Madura district, where it is stated, on the authority of the survey account, that "a horrible custom exists among the females of the Colleries. When a quarrel or dissension arises between them, the insulted woman brings her child to the house of the aggressor, and kills it at her door to avenge herself, although her vengeance is attended with the most cruel barbarity. She immediately thereafter proceeds to a neighbouring village with all her goods. In this attempt she is opposed by her neighbours, which gives rise to clamour and outrage. The complaint is then carried to the head Ambalacaur, who lays it before the elders of the village, and solicits their interference to terminate the quarrel. In the course of this investigation, if the husband finds that sufficient evidence has been brought against his wife that she had given cause for provocation and aggression, he proceeds unobserved by the assembly to his house, and brings one

of his children, and, in the presence of witnesses, kills his child at the door of the woman, who had first killed her child at his. By this mode of proceeding he considers that he has saved himself much trouble and expense, which would otherwise have devolved on him. This circumstance is soon brought to the notice of the tribunal, who proclaim that the offence committed is sufficiently avenged. But, should this voluntary retribution of revenge not be executed by the convicted person, the tribunal is prolonged to a limited period, generally fifteen days. Before the expiration of that period, one of the children of the convicted person must be killed. At the same time he is to bear all expenses for providing food, etc., for the assembly during three days." Such atrocities are not permitted under British rule.

In the Manual of the Vizagapatam district it is stated that female infanticide used to be very common all over the Jeypore country, and the Rājah is said to have made money out of it in one large talūk (division). The custom was to consult the Dāsari (priest) when a female child was born as to its fate. If it was to be killed, the parents had to pay the Amīn of the talūk a fee for the privilege of killing it; and the Amīn used to pay the Rājah three hundred rupees a year for renting the privilege of giving the license and pocketing the fees.

The practice of female infanticide was formerly very prevalent among the Khonds of Ganjam, and, in 1841, Lieutenant Macpherson was deputed to carry into effect the measures which had been proposed by Lord Elphinstone for the suppression of the Meriah (human) sacrifice

and infanticide. The crime was ascribed to various beliefs, viz. : (1) that it was an injunction by god, as one woman made the whole world suffer; (2) that it conduces to male offspring; (3) that woman, being a mischief-maker, is better out of the world than in it; (4) that the difficulty, owing to poverty, in providing marriage portions was an objection to rearing females. From Macpherson's well-known report\* the following extracts are taken. "The portion of the Khond country in which the practice of female infanticide is known to prevail is roughly estimated at 2,400 square miles, its population at 60,000, and the number of infants destroyed annually at 1,200 to 1,500. The tribes (who practice infanticide) belong to the division of the Khond people which does not offer human sacrifices. The usage of infanticide has existed amongst them from time immemorial. It owes its origin and its maintenance partly to religious opinions, partly to ideas from which certain very important features of Khond manners arise. The Khonds believe that the supreme deity, the sun god, created all things good; that the earth goddess introduced evil into the world; and that these two powers have since conflicted. The non-sacrificing tribes make the supreme deity the great object of their adoration, neglecting the earth goddess. The sacrificing tribes, on the other hand, believe the propitiation of the latter power to be the most necessary worship. Now the tribes which practice female infanticide hold that the sun god, in contemplating the

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\* Selections from the Records of the Government of India (Home Department), No. V. 1854.



deplorable effects produced by the creation of feminine nature, charged men to bring up only as many females as they could restrain from producing evil to society. This is the first idea upon which the usage is founded. Again, the Khonds believe that souls almost invariably return to animate human forms in the families in which they have been first born and received. But the reception of the soul of an infant into a family is completed only on the performance of the ceremony of naming upon the seventh day after its birth. The death of a female infant, therefore, before that ceremonial of reception, is believed to exclude its soul from the circle of family spirits, diminishing by one the chance of future female births in the family. And, as the first aspiration of every Khond is to have male children, this belief is a powerful incentive to infanticide." Macpherson, during his campaign, came across many villages of about a hundred houses, in which there was not a single female child. In his arguments with the people, he asserted that inquiry would prove that the opinion that male births are increased by the destruction of female infants is unfounded. And, with respect to the justification which is laid on the ground that the destruction of infants is a less evil than that which must arise from the contests attendant on the capricious dissolution of their marriages, he held it to be obvious that the practice of infanticide, and the cause of those contests re-act upon each other, alternately as cause and effect. Infanticide produces a scarcity of women, which raises marriage payments so high that tribes are easily induced to contest their

adjustments when dissolutions of the tie occur, while these dissolutions are plainly prompted by that scarcity which prevents every man from having a wife. On the cessation of infanticide women would become abundant, and the marriage payment would become small. Every man would have a wife as elsewhere. Women would have less power to change, and, when they did, there would be no difficulty in making the requisite adjustment of property.

In 1855, Captain Frye found many Baro Bori Khond villages without a single female child in them.

In former times, the Lambādīs, before setting out on a journey, used to procure a little child, and bury it in the ground up to its shoulders, and then drive their loaded bullocks over the unfortunate victim. In proportion to the bullocks thoroughly trampling the child to death, so their belief in a successful journey increased.\*

The practice of infanticide, as it prevailed among the Todas of the Nilgiris, is best summed up in the words of an aged Toda, during an interview with Colonel Marshall.† “I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan (the first English pioneer of the Nilgiris) visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children, but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it. I don’t know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now everyone has a mantle (putkūli), but formerly there was only one for the whole family. We did not kill them

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\* Rev. J. Cain, *Ind. Ant.*, VIII, 1879.

† A Phrenologist amongst the Todas, 1873.

to please any god, but because it was our custom. The mother never nursed the child, and the parents did not kill it. Do you think we could kill it ourselves? Those tell lies who say we laid it down before the opening of the buffalo-pen, so that it might be run over and killed by the animals. We never did such things, and it is all nonsense that we drowned it in buffalo's milk. Boys were never killed—only girls; not those who were sickly and deformed—that would be a sin; but, when we had one girl, or in some families two girls, those that followed were killed. An old woman (kelachi) used to take the child immediately it was born, and close its nostrils, ears, and mouth with a cloth thus—here pantomimic action. It would shortly droop its head, and go to sleep. We then buried it in the ground. The kelachi got a present of four annas for the deed.” The old man's remark about the cattle-pen refers to the Malagasy custom of placing a new-born child at the entrance to a cattle-pen, and then driving the cattle over it, to see whether they would trample on it or not.\* The Missionary Metz † bears out the statement that the Toda babies were killed by suffocation.

In a recent note on the proportion of the sexes among the Todas, ‡ which brings out very clearly the great excess of male over females, Mr. R. C. Punnatt states that “all who have studied the Todas are agreed upon the frequency of the practice in earlier times. Marshall,

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\* Ellis, *History of Madagascar*.

† Tribes inhabiting the Neilgherry hills. By a German Missionary, 1856.

‡ Proc. Cambridge Philosoph. Soc., XII, 1904.

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writing in 1872, refers to the large amount of female infanticide in former years, but expresses his conviction that the practice had by that time died out. Marshall's evidence is that of native assurance only. Dr. Rivers, who received the same assurance, is disinclined to place much confidence in native veracity with reference to this point, and, in view of the lack of encouragement which the practice receives from the Indian Government, this is not altogether surprising. The supposition of female infanticide, by accounting for the great disproportion in the numbers of the sexes, brings the Todas into harmony with what is known of the rest of mankind." In summarising his conclusions, Mr. Punnett notes that—

(1) Among the Todas, males preponderate greatly over females.

(2) This preponderance is doubtless due to the practice of female infanticide, which is probably still to some extent prevalent.

(3) The numerical preponderance of the males has been steadily sinking during recent years, owing probably to the check which foreign intercourse has imposed upon female infanticide.

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## MERIAH SACRIFICE.

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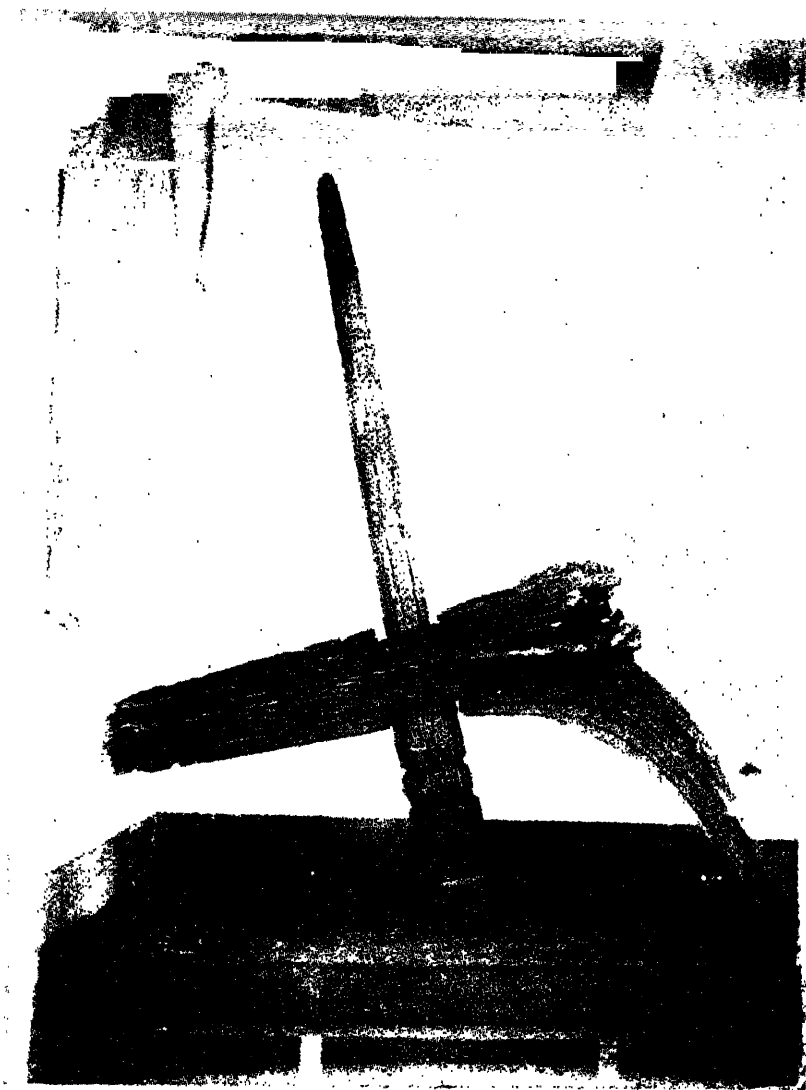
THE ethnological section of the Madras Museum received a few years ago a very interesting relic in the shape of a human (Meriah) sacrifice post from Baligudu in Ganjam (plate XXXIV). This post, which was fast being reduced to a mere shell by 'white-ants,' is, I believe, the only one now in existence. It was brought by Colonel Pickance, who was Assistant Superintendent of Police, to Baligudu from some place in the south-west of the Chinna Kimedi Maliahs, and set up in the ground near the gate of the reserve Police barracks.

"The best known case," Mr. Frazer writes,\* of human sacrifices systematically offered to ensure good crops is supplied by the Khonds or Kandhs, a Dravidian race in Bengal and Madras. Our knowledge of them is derived from the accounts written by British officers, who, forty or fifty years ago, were engaged in putting them down. The sacrifices were offered to the earth goddess, Tari Pennu or Bera Pennu, and were believed to ensure good crops, and immunity from all diseases and accidents. In particular, they were considered necessary in the cultivation of turmeric, the Khonds arguing that the turmeric could not have a deep red colour without the shedding of blood. The victim, a Meriah, was acceptable to the goddess only if he had been purchased, or had been born

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\* The Golden Bough.

Plate XXXIV.



Meriah Sacrifice Post.



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a victim, that is the son of a victim father, or had been devoted as a child by his father or guardian."

In 1837, Mr. Russell, in a report on the districts entrusted to his control, wrote as follows.\* "The ceremonies attending the barbarous rite, and still more the mode of destroying life, vary in different parts of the country. In the Māliahs of Goomsur, the sacrifice is offered annually to Thadha Pennoo (the earth) under the effigy of a bird intended to represent a peacock, with the view of propitiating the deity to grant favourable seasons and crops. The ceremony is performed at the expense of, and in rotation by certain mootahs (districts) composing a community, and connected together from local circumstances. Besides these periodical sacrifices, others are made by single mootahs, and even by individuals, to avert any threatening calamity from sickness, murrain, or other cause. Grown men are the most esteemed (as victims) because the most costly. Children are purchased, and reared for years with the family of the person who ultimately devotes them to a cruel death, when circumstances are supposed to demand sacrifice at his hands. They seem to be treated with kindness, and, if young, are kept under no constraint; but, when old enough to be sensible of the fate that awaits them, they are placed in fetters and guarded. Most of those who were rescued had been sold by their parents or nearest relations, a practice which, from all we could learn, is very common. Persons of riper age are kidnapped by

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\* Selections from the Records, Government of India, No. V, Human Sacrifice and Infanticide, 1854.



wretches who trade in human flesh. The victim must always be purchased. Criminals, or prisoners captured in war, are not considered fitting subjects. The price is paid indifferently in brass utensils, cattle, or corn. The zanee (or priest), who may be of any caste, officiates at the sacrifice, but he performs the poojah (offering of flowers, incense, etc.) to the idol through the medium of the Toomba, who must be a Khond child under seven years of age. This child is fed and clothed at the public expense, eats with no other person, and is subjected to no act deemed impure. For a month prior to the sacrifice there is much feasting and intoxication, and dancing round the Meriah who is adorned with garlands, etc., and, on the day before the performance of the barbarous rite, is stupefied with toddy, and made to sit, or, if necessary, is bound at the bottom of a post, bearing the effigy above described. The assembled multitude then dance around to music, and, addressing the earth, say : ' O God, we offer the sacrifice to you. Give us good crops, seasons, and health.' After which they address the victim ' We bought you with a price, and did not seize you. Now we sacrifice you according to custom, and no sin rests with us.' On the following day, the victim, being again intoxicated and anointed with oil, each individual present touches the anointed part, and wipes the oil on his own head. All then proceed in procession around the village and its boundaries, preceded by music, bearing the victim and a pole, to the top of which is attached a tuft of peacock's feathers. On returning to the post, which is always placed near the village deity called Zakaree

Pennoo, and represented by three stones, near which the brass effigy in the shape of the peacock is buried, they kill a hog in sacrifice, and, having allowed the blood to flow into a pit prepared for the purpose, the victim who, if it has been found possible, has been previously made senseless from intoxication, is seized and thrown in, and his face pressed down until he is suffocated in the bloody mire amid the noise of instruments. The Zanee then cuts a piece of flesh from the body, and buries it with ceremony near the effigy and village idol, as an offering to the earth. All the rest afterwards go through the same form, and carry the bloody prize to their villages, where the same rites are performed, part being interred near the village idol, and little bits on the boundaries. The head and face remain untouched, and the bones, when bare, are buried with them in the pit. After this horrid ceremony has been completed, a buffalo calf is brought in front of the post, and, his fore feet having been cut off, is left there till the following day. Women, dressed in male attire and armed as men, then drink, dance and sing round the spot, the calf is killed and eaten, and the Zanee (priest) is dismissed with a present of rice and a hog or calf."

In the same year, Mr. Arbuthnot, Collector of Vizagapatam, reported as follows. "Of the hill tribe, Codooloo, there are said to be two distinct classes, the Cotia Codooloo and Jathapoo Codooloo. The former class is that which is in the habit of offering human sacrifices to the god called Jenkery, with a view to secure good crops. This ceremony is generally performed on the Sunday preceding or following the Pongal feast. The victim is

seldom carried by force, but procured by purchase, and there is a fixed price for each person, which consists of forty articles such as a bullock, a male buffalo, a cow, a goat, a piece of cloth, a silk cloth, a brass pot, a large plate, a bunch of plantains, etc. The man who is destined for the sacrifice is immediately carried before the god, and a small quantity of rice coloured with saffron is put upon his head. The influence of this is said to prevent his attempting to escape, even though set at liberty. It would appear, however, that, from the moment of his seizure till he is sacrificed, he is kept in a continued state of stupefaction or intoxication. He is allowed to wander about the village, to eat and drink anything he may take a fancy to, and even to have connection with any of the women whom he may meet. On the morning set apart for the sacrifice, he is carried before the idol in a state of intoxication. One of the villagers officiates as priest, who cuts a small hole in the stomach of the victim, and with the blood that flows from the wound the idol is besmeared. Then the crowds from the neighbouring villages rush forward, and he is literally cut into pieces. Each person who is so fortunate as to procure it carries away a morsel of the flesh, and presents it to the idol of his own village."

Concerning a method of sacrifice, which is illustrated by the post preserved in the museum, Colonel Campbell records \* that "one of the most common ways of offering the sacrifice in Chinna Kimedi is to the effigy of an elephant (hatti mundo or elephant's head) rudely carved

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\* Personal Narrative of Service among the Wild Tribes of Khondistan.

in wood, fixed on the top of a stout post, on which it is made to revolve. After the performance of the usual ceremonies, the intended victim is fastened to the proboscis of the elephant, and, amidst the shouts and yells of the excited multitude of Khonds, is rapidly whirled round, when, at a given signal by the officiating Zanee or priest, the crowd rush in, seize the Meriah, and with their knives cut the flesh off the shrieking wretch as long as life remains. He is then cut down, the skeleton burnt, and the horrid orgies are over. In several villages I counted as many as fourteen effigies of elephants, which had been used in former sacrifices. These I caused to be overthrown by the baggage elephants attached to my camp in the presence of the assembled Khonds, to show them that these venerated objects had no power against the living animal, and to remove all vestiges of their bloody superstition." In another report Colonel Campbell describes how the miserable victim is dragged along the fields, surrounded by a crowd of half intoxicated Khonds who, shouting and screaming, rush upon him, and with their knives cut the flesh piecemeal from the bones, avoiding the head and bowels, till the living skeleton, dying from loss of blood, is relieved from torture, when its remains are burnt, and the ashes mixed with the new grain to preserve it from insects. Yet again he describes a sacrifice which was peculiar to the Khonds of Jeypore. "It is," he says, "always succeeded by the sacrifice of three human beings, two to the sun to the east and west of the village, and one in the centre, with the usual barbarities of the Meriah. A stout wooden

post about six feet long is firmly fixed in the ground, at the foot of it a narrow grave is dug, and to the top of the post the victim is firmly fastened by the long hair of his head. Four assistants hold his outstretched arms and legs, the body being suspended horizontally over the grave, with the face towards the earth. The officiating Junna or priest, standing on the right side, repeats the following invocation, at intervals hacking with his sacrificing knife the back part of the shrieking victim's neck. 'O Mighty Manicksoro, this is your festal day. To the Khonds the offering is Meriah, to kings Junna. On account of this sacrifice you have given to kings kingdoms, guns, and swords. The sacrifice we now offer you must eat, and we pray that our battle-axes may be converted into swords, our bows and arrows into gun powder and balls; and, if we have any quarrels with other tribes, give us the victory. Preserve us from the tyranny of kings and their officers.' Then, addressing the victim, 'That we may enjoy prosperity, we offer you a sacrifice to our god Manicksoro, who will immediately eat you, so be not grieved at our slaying you. Your parents were aware, when we purchased you from them for sixty rupees, that we did so with intent to sacrifice you. There is, therefore, no sin on our heads, but on your parents. After you are dead, we shall perform your obsequies.' The victim is then decapitated, the body thrown into the grave, and the head left suspended from the post till devoured by wild beasts. The knife remains fastened to the post till the three sacrifices have been performed, when it is removed with much ceremony." In an account

by Captain Mac Viccar of the sacrifice as carried out at Maji Deso, it is stated that "on the day of sacrifice the Meriah is surrounded by the Khonds, who beat him violently on the head with the heavy metal bangles, which they purchase at the fairs, and wear on these occasions. If this inhuman smashing does not immediately destroy the victim's life, an end is put to his sufferings by strangulation, a slit bamboo being used for the purpose. Strips of flesh are then cut off the back, and each recipient of the precious treasure carries his portion to the stream which waters his fields, and there suspends it on a pole. The remains of the mangled carcass are then buried, and funeral obsequies are performed seven days subsequently, and repeated one year afterwards."

The Khonds of Bara Mootah promised to relinquish the rite on condition, *inter alia*, that they should be at liberty to sacrifice buffaloes, monkeys, goats, etc., to their deities with all the solemnities observed on occasions of human sacrifice; and that they should be at liberty, upon all occasions, to denounce to their gods, the Government, and some of its servants in particular, as the cause of their having relinquished the great rite.

The last recorded Meriah sacrifice in the Ganjam Māliahs occurred in 1852, and there are still Khonds alive, who were present at it. Twenty-five descendants of persons who were reserved for sacrifice, but were rescued by Government officers, returned themselves as Meriah at the Census, 1901. The Khonds have now substituted a buffalo for a human being. The animal is hewn to pieces while alive, and the villagers rush home to

their villages, to bury the flesh in the soil, and so secure prosperous crops. The sacrifice is not unaccompanied by risk to the performers, as the buffalo, before dying, frequently kills one or more of its tormentors. This was the case near Balliguda in 1899, when a buffalo killed the sacrificer. In the previous year, the desire of a village to intercept the bearer of the flesh for a neighbouring village led to a fight, in which two men were killed.

It was the practice, a few years ago, at every Dassara festival in Jeypore, Vizagapatam, to select a specially fine ram, wash it, shave its head, affix thereto red and white bottu and nāmam (sect marks) between the eyes and down the nose, and gird it with a new white cloth after the manner of a human being. The animal being then fastened in a sitting posture, certain pūja was performed by the Brāhman priest, and it was decapitated. The supplanting of human victims by animals is indicated by various religious legends. Thus a hind was substituted for Iphigenia, and a ram for Isaac.

It was stated by the officers of the Meriah Agency that there was reason to believe that the Rāja of Jeypore, when he was installed at his father's decease in 1860-61, sacrificed a girl thirteen years of age at the shrine of the goddess Durga in the town of Jeypore.\* The last attempted human sacrifice (which was nearly successful) in the Vizagapatam district, among the Kutia Khonds, was, I believe, in 1880. But the memory of the abandoned practice is kept green by one of the Khond songs, for a

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\* Vizagapatam Manual.

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translation of which we are indebted to Mr. J. E. Friend-Pereira.\*

At the time of the great Kiabon (Campbell) Saheb's coming, the country was in darkness; it was enveloped in mist.

Having sent paks to collect the people of the land, they, having surrounded them, caught the meria sacrificers.

Having caught the meria sacrificers, they brought them; and again they went and seized the evil councillors.

Having seen the chains and shackles, the people were afraid; murder and bloodshed were quelled.

Then the land became beautiful; and a certain Mokodella (MacPherson) Saheb came.

He destroyed the lairs of the tigers and bears in the hills and rocks, and taught wisdom to the people.

After the lapse of a month he built bungalows and schools; and he advised them to learn reading and law.

They learnt wisdom and reading; they acquired silver and gold. Then all the people became wealthy.

Human sacrifice was not practised in the Kurtilli muttah of the Ganjam Maliahs. The reason of this is assigned to the fact that the first attempt was made with a crooked knife, and the sacrificers made such a bad business of it that they gave it up. Colonel Campbell gives another tradition, that through humanity one of the Kurtilli Pätros (head of a group of villages) threatened to leave the muttah if the practice was carried out.

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\* Journ., As. Soc., Bengal, 1898.



## ON DRESS.

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As in Europe, so in Southern India, fashion plays an important rôle in connection with native dress, both male and female. The assumption of the turban by the autochthonous Todas of the Nîlgiris; the replacement of the tribal turban of the Badagas by knitted night cap of bright red or orange hue; the pork-pie cap, beloved of native student, and oftentimes decorated with monstrous knitted flower pattern; the unstarched white shirt, patent leather boots, and white socks of the Bengāli Bābu clerk; the adoption by native cricketers of machine-made coloured blazers, as evil in colour contrast as those of many a house eleven at an English public school, are but a few examples of change for the worse in native male attire. Sometime ago I was shocked by the appearance of a member of my staff in a new patch-work white shirt adorned with no less than six individual and distinct trade-marks, representing the King Emperor, Britannia, an elephant, etc. A native of the labouring classes is, to my mind, far better dressed when clad in plain white loin cloth stained with indigenous seruver-dye, and white or seruver-red turban, than when his turban is dyed with Turkey-red, and the loin cloth is of white imported fabric with the much-prized trade-mark, or replaced by unseemly pantaloons made of some gaudy imported piece-good. No longer does the jungle tribesman, who has emerged from his

uncivilised condition to work for regular wages on planters' estates, rest content with a simple country-made cloth around his loins, but appears, on high days and holidays, clad in turban or cap, and woven coat of English cut. And, on the occasion of a visit to the village of a hill tribe, I found the entire male community dressing in gorgeous apparel for a sacred festival in a neighbouring grove, and painting their faces with various marks with the aid of miniature looking-glasses and coal-tar dyes, which, with imported fabrics, are exposed for sale at the weekly shandy (market).

Between fashion in female dress in England and Southern India there is this marked difference, that, whereas in England change in form (with the bloomer and bicycle costumes as extreme examples in modern times) is the most conspicuous feature, in Southern India, while the shape of the sâri, jacket, and petticoat have remained unaltered, a radical change has taken place in recent years in both design and colour owing to the widespread introduction of imported printed fabrics (piece-goods), which now constitute a conspicuous feature of bazârs throughout the Madras Presidency. And it is curious to look back, and reflect that the term piece-goods was originally applied in trade to the Indian cotton fabrics exported to England.

Three primary factors are mainly responsible for guiding fashion so far as native female dress in Southern India is concerned, viz., novelty, the quaint or grotesque, and artistic beauty. And the least concerned, in these days of the decline and fall of South Indian industrial

arts, is artistic beauty. The love of the grotesque, which prevails among the natives of Southern India, is best illustrated by the carvings on Hindu temples and mythological paintings, and is responsible for the demand for the eccentric devices on female dress, with which the bazārs are now stocked, and which are disseminated, through the medium of weekly fairs or markets, to remote places, which do not rejoice in the equivalent of milliner's shops.

In addition to new and showy design, which will captivate the native eye, the ticket or label on each piece is an important element of attraction, and as much ingenuity is displayed in the production of the grotesque on the ticket as on the fabric. And I have before me, as I write, a glazed label depicting a group composed of a native lady with turmeric complexion, clad in a pink sārī, seated on a maroon cushion, and engaged in conversation with a naked little boy blue, while a chubby pink child looks on round the corner of a violet purdah (curtain). We are nowadays familiar with litigation in connection with trade-marks in their commercial aspect. Not long ago an incident occurred, which related to these marks in their religious aspect. A public meeting of Muhammadans assembled in the mosque at Ootacamund with a view to taking steps to present a petition to the Governor to stop the importation of a certain brand of cigarettes made in Germany, as the trade-mark represented a bird of paradise with the kalīma (the Muhammadan confession of faith) round its neck, as being an insult to Muhammadans.

The *raison d'être* of the gaudy eccentricities of design in female apparel, men's shawls and turbans, which are now endemic in the bazārs of Southern India, is the endeavour on the part of the merchant to secure a fabric which will be attractive, and command an extensive sale combined with a large profit. For example, some time ago a fabric, intended for making up into female petticoats, arrived in the Madras market, with a flower and bird device and a wondrous border composed of an endless procession of white bicycles of ancient pattern with green gearing and treadles, separated from each other by upright stems with green and yellow fronds growing out of a conventional border. In another importation, the same bicycles appeared on a cloth with designs of flowers and fishes. The whole attraction of these fabrics laid in the representation of the bicycle, which is now established as a 'common object of the sea-shore' in Madras.

The native scale of colour differs from the British colour-scale, as represented by dyers, and mainly in this, that the English colours tend to be crude, while the native colours are of more subdued or compound tints. For example, the beautiful vegetable reds of Madura and Conjeeveram are not what we should call a true red like the imported Turkey-red, but, as can readily be seen in some of the beautiful woven cloths in the industrial section of the Madras museum, red with a slight admixture of blue. I do not for a moment contend that the imported fabrics, which form so conspicuous a feature of the female attire of the middle and lower classes of the native community, should possess the

artistic merit, either in colour or design, of the lovely s̄aris manufactured at Adoni, Arni, Madura, Tanjore and other places, or the beautiful satins of Ayyampet. But I do condemn both colour and design of many of the imported colour-printed fabrics, which, in a native throng, offend the eye, when brought in contrast with the more subdued colouring of the woven cloths made by native weavers with country-dyed yarn: "It should," Ruskin writes,\* "be one of the first objects of all manufacturers to produce stuffs not only beautiful and quaint in design, but also adapted for every-day service, and decorous in humble and secluded life. And your duty as manufacturers is to form the market as much as to supply it. And it rests with the manufacturer to determine whether he will make his wares educational instruments, or mere drugs of the market." With which quotation I close my brief lay sermon on modern dress, and return to ethnography.

Some tribes in Southern India have only recently advanced beyond what has been termed the fig-leaf state of society. Thus, writing in 1874, Mr. Ullal Raghavendra Rao states † that the Koragas of South Canara wear "leaves of the forest interwoven together. The story goes that, at the time when the Koragas reigned, one of these black-legged (the usual expression by which they are referred to during the night) demanded a girl of high birth in marriage. Being enraged at this, the upper class of the people withheld, after the overthrow of the Koraga empire, every kind of dress from Koraga

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\* The two Paths.

† Ind. Ant., III, 1874.

women, who, to protect themselves from disgrace, have since had recourse to the leaves of the forest, conceiving that god has decreed them this kind of covering." A few years later (1881) Mr. Walhouse tells us\* that the Koragas wore an "apron of twigs and leaves over the buttocks. Once this was the only covering allowed them, and a mark of their deep degradation. But now, when no longer compulsory, and of no use, as it is worn over the clothes, the women still retain it, believing its disuse would be unlucky. I am told that the Koragas, when they come into a town, for marketing or other purpose, walk in Indian file, concealing their nakedness by means of a series of cloths stitched together, spread out between them, and extending down the line. A small piece of dry areca palm leaf sewed together covers the head of the Koraga, and forms a hat for him. This hat, at their feasts, he uses as a drinking-cup, which will hold a considerable quantity of liquor.

In a note on the Irulas, Mackenzie writes as follows.† "After the Yuga Pralayam (deluge, or change from one Yuga to another), the Villars or Irulans, Malayans, and Vēdāns, supposed to be descendants of a Rishi under the influence of a malignant curse, were living in a state of nature, though they have now taken to wearing some kind of covering, males putting on skins and females stitched leaves."

The Thanda Pulayan women of the west coast wear a primitive dress, made of the leaves of a sedge (thanda), cut into lengths, and tied round the waist in such a

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\* Ind. Ant., X, 1881.

† Tamil Manuscripts, Vol. III.

fashion that the unwoven strings hang in a bushy tail behind, and present the same appearance in front, reaching below the knees (plate XXXV). When a Thanda Pulayan girl first assumes this garment, to replace the strip of areca palm bark worn in early childhood, a ceremony called *thanda kalyānam*, or *thanda marriage*, is celebrated, which is the occasion of a feast of curry and rice, fish, and toddy. The garment is generally made by a female relative. It is fast going out of fashion, as Māppillas and others who own the Pulayans compel them to wear cotton cloths. The weaving of this garment is accounted for by a tradition that "a certain high-caste man had been sowing grain, and planting vegetables in his fields, but found that his daily work was in some unknown way frustrated. For, whatever he planted or sowed in the day, was carefully picked up and taken when men slept. So he set a watch, and one night he saw coming out of a hole hitherto unknown to him certain beings like men, but quite naked, who set to work destroying his hopes of a crop. Pursuing them, he succeeded in catching a man and woman, and he was so ashamed of their condition that he gave the man his own upper cloth, and made him put it on; but, not having one to spare for the woman, she (following mother Eve's example) made herself an apron of grass." \*

The jungle Vettuvans of Malabar wear clusters of long leaves, suspended from the waist. The origin of this gear is said to be that, when the god Parameswara

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\* Rev. W. J. Richards, *Ind. Ant.*, IX, 1880.

Plate XXXV.



Thanda Pulayan.





was distributing gifts of clothing to the various peoples of the earth, he asked the Vettuvan women whether they would prefer a daily or yearly change of apparel. They decided in favour of the former, and the god, to punish them for their ambition, decreed that their daily dress should consist of leaves. They change their foliage every noon, and sleep in it.

In a note on the Bhondas of Jaipūr, Mr. J. A. May informs us \* that the female attire "consists of just a piece of cloth, either made of kerong bark and manufactured by themselves, or purchased from the weavers, about a foot square, and only sufficient to cover a part of one hip. It is attached to their waists by a string, on which it runs, and can be shifted round to any side. A most ludicrous sight has often been presented to me by a stampede among a number of these women, when I have happened to enter a village unexpectedly. On my approach, one and all hurried to their respective dwellings, and, as they ran in all directions, endeavoured to shift this rag round to the part most likely to be exposed to me. The peculiar dress originated in the following legend. The goddess Sita happened to travel through this part of the country, and, when she halted on one occasion, while superintending the preparation of her midday repast, found herself surrounded by a large number of naked women. She blushed to behold such indecency, and forthwith presented them with a piece of tusser silk cloth, which was eagerly accepted, but, when

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\* Ind. Ant., II, 1873.

divided, was found to supply each one with only just enough to cover one hip. The goddess, whose travelling wardrobe evidently did not allow of greater liberality, then commanded that they should always in future cover themselves thus much, death being the penalty of their disobedience. My informant gave me to understand that one of the Government Agents some years ago insisted on a young woman being properly clothed. The result was she survived the change only three days."

According to the Vizagapatam Manual, the small strip of hempen cloth worn by the Bonda or Nanga (naked) Porojas is so adjusted as to leave the left thigh, both in front and behind, entirely uncovered. They are required, moreover, to shave their heads. Any relaxation of either custom would lead, it is believed, to the destruction of the tribe by tigers.

The bustle or dress-improver, made of tadamāra fibre, and worn by the Gadaba women of Vizagapatam outside the loin-cloth, is said to have been copied from that of Sīta, the wife of Rāma, when she followed her banished lord to the wilds of Dandakāranyam. Each division of the Gadabas has a distinctive dress for females, manufactured out of the karenga fibre. Thus, the cloth of the Boda Gadaba women consists of black or blue and white stripes; the Parengi Gadabas wear white with a thin red border; the Allaru Gadabas wear red, blue, and white.\*

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\* H. D. Taylor, Madras Census Report, 1891.

Plate XXXVI.



Tiyan Woman.



“In the first quarter of the nineteenth century,” Mr. G. T. Mackenzie writes,\* “the female converts to Christianity, in the extreme south, ventured, contrary to the old rules for the lower castes, to clothe themselves above the waist. This innovation was made the occasion for threats, violence, and a series of disturbances. Similar disturbances arose from the same cause nearly thirty years later, and, in 1859, Sir Charles Trevelyan, Governor of Madras, interfered, and granted permission to the women of the lower castes to wear a cloth over the breasts and shoulders.”

Concerning the Tiyans of Malabar, Moor, writing towards the close of the eighteenth century,† narrates that “we were told that, many years ago, during the reign of a princess, the men were addicted to practices so vile that a distant hint of them can only be given; and, to wean their minds from such intercourse, and turn them to their proper object, she caused the upper part of the females’ garments to be lain aside; supposing such a continual display of attractive charms could not but have the wished-for effect. Another authority informed us that a treasonable insurrection was nearly effected by the aid of the females, who carried arms under their garments, and supplied the men with them; and from this cause proceeds their present nakedness”. By General Burton ‡ the adoption of a covering to the breasts on the west coast is naively attributed to the outspoken remarks of the British soldier.

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\* Christianity in Travancore, 1901.

† Narrative of Little’s Detachment, 1794.

‡ An Indian Olio.

The jungle Kādir women of the Ānaimalai hills, when they meet a European on the road, with their body-cloths wrapped round them in such a way as to expose the upper halves of their breasts, manifest symptoms of shyness and modesty, and stand aside with face averted so that they cannot see the stranger, on the same principle which prompts some eastern women, if surprised when taking a bath, to turn the face, no further concealment being necessary. Ideas of modesty, it has been said, are altogether relative and conventional, and it is not the feeling of shame that has given rise to the covering of the body, but the covering that has provoked the feeling of shame. This is well illustrated by the difference in behaviour of the native females of Malabar and the Tamil women of the east coast. In Malabar the body-clothing of the Nāyar, Tiyan, Cheruman females, etc., above the loins is exceedingly scanty. As Mr. Logan says :\* “The women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nayar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of western notions, immodesty.” According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal

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\* Manual of Malabar.

Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes \* that, "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." The observant Abbé Dubois noticed that, "of all the women in India, it is especially the courtesans (dancing girls or Dēva-dāsis) who are the most decently clothed, as experience has no doubt taught them that for a woman to display her charms damps sensual ardour instead of exciting it, and that the imagination is more easily captivated than the eye."† A Tamil woman, young or old and wizened, going along the high road, with breasts partially uncovered by her ample body-cloth, will, when she sees a European coming, pull the cloth over them from a feeling of shame in the presence of the foreigner, which is absent in the presence of her fellow-countrymen. So, too, a Tamil or Toda woman, when undergoing the process of measurement at my hands, is most particular in arranging her upper garment so as to conceal her breasts, whereas a Malabar woman has no hesitation in appearing with breasts completely exposed, or in throwing off the slender wrapper which may cover her shoulders, and considers the exposure in no way immodest.

A friend, bartering for the two bead necklets, which constituted the full-dress of a jungle girl, had no difficulty in securing one, but no bribe would tempt her to part with the second, as, in its absence, she would be naked.

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\* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

† Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies.



## NAMES OF NATIVES.

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AN orthodox Brāhman, when asked his name, will not give it readily and in a direct manner, but will, after some hesitation, say "People call me" or "My name is said to be" so and so. On meeting a person, such as an elder, to whom respect is due, it is strict etiquette to prostrate oneself before him, and repeat his *abhivathanam*, which contains his *sakha* (*Vēda*), *gōtra* (house name), and name. This is only done by the very orthodox. Some Brāhmans believe that, if they mention their name or age, they run the risk of shortening their life. Moreover, from a Hindu point of view, self must always be kept in the background as a sign of modesty. Even in the Sanskrit grammar the third person comes first, and the first last. A *slōka* runs to the following effect :—

Atma nāma gurornāma ;  
 Namāthikripunasyacha ;  
 Srēyaskāmo nagrinhiyāth ;  
 Jyestāh pathya kalathryayoh.

Which, being translated, means that he who wishes for a prosperous life should not pronounce the name of his natural or spiritual father (*guru*), eldest son or wife, or a great miser. A Sanskrit stanza in the *Sukranitisara* runs to the effect that one may not make known the following nine things : one's age, wealth, family secrets, mode of acquiring knowledge of mantrams or medicine connection with the opposite sex, gifts to others, respect or disgrace to oneself.

Wives believe that to tell their husband's name, or pronounce it even in a dream, would bring him to an untimely end. Most Brāhman, and some non-Brāhman castes, name their children after their grandparents or great-grandparents, who are not living. In such cases, the parents call them by pet names, or abbreviated forms of their true names, of which the following are examples :—

*Pet names.*—Payyan, Mogu, Nayana, Doraswāmi, Chikkia, Doddappa, Appanna, Anappa, Swāmi (converted into Sami).

*Abbreviated names.*—Kittu or Kichchu (Krishna), Rāmu (Ramaswāmi), Rukku (Rukmani), Janu (Janaki), Chechu (Seshadri), Ecchi (Lakshmi), Mani (Subrahmanian), Nanu (Narayana), Rāju (Rājagopalan).

Some Lingayats name their children after their ancestors, especially after grandparents. So long as these are living, the children are named after the gods, but assume their names after their death.

Women may not call their parents, husband, father and mother-in-law, brother or sister-in-law by their name. The mother-in-law will be called amma, and the sister-in-law akka. A girl, when she enters into a new family on marriage, receives a new name. This name is given to her by her husband's relations, and signifies that she has *de facto*, not only *de jure*, become a member of her husband's family. So much importance is attached to the new name that it completely ousts the girl's former name. The old name is known as her mother's house name, the new one as her mother-in-law's name.

Victoria, or Rāni, after the late Queen-Empress, is the name given to pet daughters in many Hindu families.

And the title Empress is said to have been used as a surname by a well-known Dāsi (dancing-girl) in the city of Madras. Prince of Wales is sometimes the pet name given to an eldest son.

The custom of calling a newly-born child, after its parents have lost a first born or more in succession, by an opprobrious name, is common among many classes, including even Muhammadans. In the Mysore country the custom of boring the right nostril of a child, whose elder brothers or sisters have died, prevails. Such children are called Gunda (rock), Kalla (stone), Huccha (lunatic), Tippa (dung-hill). The last name is given after some rubbish from a dung-heap has been brought in a sieve, and the child placed on it.\* "Other names of despised things," Mr. A. Srinivasan writes "are Pentayya (refuse), Siprayya and Dibbadu (broom and mound of earth); of distasteful objects Vembu (nim tree); and of words that mean disrelish Rossayya (disgust). Chithabi (decayed leaf), a Muhammadan name, shows that the principle of self-abasement finds favour with the Moslem also. Some call themselves cats (Pillayya and Pillamma) in the hope that they may atone thereby for the sin of having caused the death of cats." Lingayat children, whose predecessors have died in their infancy, are named Sudugadavva (burial ground), Tippiah or Tippavva (rubbish heap), Tirakappa (mendicant), Gundappa (rock). These names signify humility, and are given in the belief that god will have pity on the parents, and give the children a long lease of life.

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\* Narayan Aiyangar. Ind. Ant., IX., 1880.

The custom of giving opprobrious names, to avert the jealousy of evil powers, is common in the Telugu country. For example, Pichchi (mad), Verri (idiot), Engili (spittle), are very potent for this purpose. Another device is to give a Hindu child a Muhammadan or English name, such as Badē Sahib or Rāpsan (corruption of Robertson).<sup>\*</sup> Longly is used as a name for a maimed person in the district in which Mr. Longley of the Civil Service, who had a maimed limb, served. A robber, who was hung at Trichinopoly, became so popular as a demon that children were frequently named after him.<sup>†</sup>

It is a custom among some Hindu women, when they lose their first two children, to beg of three persons three rags as bedding for the third child. They also dig a grave, and fill it in, or roll the child in the dust, or in a tray filled with bran. Sometimes they beg for money instead of bran, and with the money collected have a silver ornament made, which they tie on to the neck of the child. This custom is very common among the Telugus. Sterile women believe that children will be born to them, if they place a newly-born infant in their lap, or perform for it the unlovely duties of a nurse.

Vows are sometimes made at a snake shrine with the object of procuring issue, and if a child is born, it is given an appropriate name, such as Nāgappa, Subbana, Nāgamma, etc.<sup>‡</sup>

Childless parents, to whom offspring is born after the performance of a vow, name it after the deity, whose aid

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<sup>\*</sup> H. G. Prendergast. *Ibid.*

<sup>†</sup> Monier Williams. *Brahmanism and Hinduism.*

<sup>‡</sup> *Manual of the Bellary district, 1905.*

has been invoked, such as Srinivāsa at Tirupati, Lakshminarasimha at Sholingūr, or some other local god or goddess. At Negapatam, some Hindus make vows to the Mirān (Muhammadian saint) of Nagūr, and name the child after him. The name thus given is not, however, used in every-day life, but abandoned, like the ceremonial name given prior to the Hindu upanayanam ceremony.

The following nicknames, given on account of physical attributes or deformity, are selected from a long vocabulary, which has been mainly brought together during my tribal wanderings :—

Thief.	Blind.
Hunchback.	Crow.
Stout.	Left-handed.
Piles.	Treble-jointed.
Pot-bellied.	Snorer.
Black-bellied.	Lame.
Spleen.	Scarred.
Fond of honey.	Dwarf.
Brought up on bran or buttermilk.	Protruding navel.
Puffy-checked.	Crook-necked.
Glutton.	Bandy-legged.
Drunkard.	Shaky-legged.
Hairy as a fox.	Long-legged.
Bushy-haired.	Itch-legged.
Bear.	Donkey-legged.
Crocodile.	Tall as a palmyra.
Hairy like the tail of a mongoose.	Tremulous head.
Dirty.	Monkey-head.
	Bald-head.
	Double-head.

Big-head.	Man who keeps on scratch- ing his body.
Mango-shaped head.	Stammerer.
Stone-head.	With mouth like a Yāli (mythological beast com- mon in temple carvings).
Cocoanut-shaped head.	Fakir (mendicant).
Blood-shot-eyed.	Short as a brinjal.
Elephant-eyed.	Old.
Cat-eyed.	Knees knocking together.
Squint-eyed.	Long-nosed like a crow.
Big nose.	Toothless.
Legless.	Broom.
Crooked mouthed.	Disgust.
Irregular toothed.	Nīm tree.
Tobacco.	Strong as a hammer.
Man who came back from the cremation ground.	
Man who revived after death.	

I am informed by Mr. Vincent that the Kādīrs of the western mountains have a peculiar word āli, denoting apparently a fellow or thing, which they apply as a suffix to animate and inanimate objects, *e.g.*, Karaman āli, black fellow; pūv āli, flower. Among Kādir nicknames, the following occur:—

White hand.	Tiger.
White mother.	Pain.
White flower.	Fruit.
Long legs.	Milk.
Round man.	Virgin.
Stick.	Love.
Beauty.	Breasts.
Myna (a bird).	

A former Head Magistrate of a district was known as Vendikkai Dorai (Mr. *Hibiscus esculentus*)—a name,

which is given in reference to the sticky nature of the mucilage in *Hibiscus* fruits, to those who try to smooth matters over between contending parties. The nickname Velakkennai (castor-oil) is given for a similar reason.

The name Kulla Katthirikkai, or short brinjal (fruits of *Solanum Melongena*) is given to people of dwarfish stature. The name Balegadde is derived from ancestors who had to subsist on the stem of the plantain (balegadde) during their flight before the advance of Tīpū Sultān. Rēpatikira Doragāru (Mr. Come Tomorrow) is the name given by natives to Europeans who back out of interviews. Among one division of the Sāvaras, names are given to children after Government appointments, or officials who are held in esteem by the community. Such are Governor, Collector, Superintendent, Tahsildar (native revenue officer), Innes, Master, and Kolnol (colonel). The names Sirkar (Government) and Cutchery (court-house) occur among the Todas of the Nīlgiris.

In Ganjam, an individual was nicknamed Bojho Patro from his love of the tom-tom (native drum). An Urāli was named Kothē (a stone), because he was born on a rock near Kotagiri.

A petition from a native servant to his master refers, in English, to the relations between his wife and cock-eyed Virappan.

A Badaga was nicknamed Relly Hiriya because, like a certain Mr. Reilly, he had lost an eye. Among the Badagas Kādan is a common pet name in memory of a monegar (head-man) of that name, who was very popular and famous some years ago. The Badagas give

nicknames to those outside their own community, and a Revenue Inspector who had strabismus was called Oru Kanna Iyaru, or squint-eyed Iyar.

Names which have their counterpart in England are Black, White, Little, Short, Long and Green. To which may be added Red, Greenish-blue, and Brownish-black.

In the Bellary district, the names Munrol and Munrolappa, after Sir Thomas Munro, are common, and are given in hope that the boy may attain to the same celebrity as the former Governor of Madras. One of Sir Thomas Munro's good qualities was that, like Rāma and Rob Roy, his arms reached to his knees, or, in other words, he possessed the quality of an Ajanubahu, which is the heritage of kings, or those who have blue blood in them. This particular anatomical character I have myself met with only once—in a Tinnevely Shānān, whose height was 173 cm. and span of arms 194 cm. Rob Roy, it will be remembered, could without stooping tie his garters, which were placed two inches below the knee. An old woman at Banganapallē, when asked her age, said that she was ten years old when Sir Thomas Munro visited Gūti. Instances of names of Anglo-Indians distinguished as soldiers, civilians, or merchants, are to be found in different parts of the Madras Presidency, with resultant hybrids such as Doveton Ranga Rao, Brodie Chengalraya Mudaliar, Crole Venkataswāmi Naidu, Dare-house\* Venkataswāmi Naidu. In this way the name of Arthur Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) is perpetuated, and that of General Harris,

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\* Dare House = the Firm of Messrs. Parry & Co.



the conqueror of Seringapatam, is connected with a shepherd family, one of whose ancestors was steward to the renowned Commander-in-Chief.

It is stated in the Vizagapatam Manual that, during the reign of Chōla Chakravati, the Kamsalas (artisans) claimed to be equal to Brāhmans. This offended the sovereign, and he ordered their destruction. Some only escaped death by taking shelter with people of the "Ozu" caste. As an acknowledgment of their gratitude, many of the Kamsalas have Ozu affixed to their house-name, *e.g.*, Kattōzu, Lakkozu.

As examples of prenomens of Hindus and Muhammadans after well-known localities, the following may be quoted:—Madras Muhammad Hussain; Dindigul Alasingarachari; Trichinopoly Arumukkam Pillai; Arcot S. Babu Rao; Conjeeveram Dēvarajan; Madura S. Ramasubbha Aiyar. A Muhammadan in the Kurnool disirict had the name of the Lunjabunda Kasim Sahib. "In this district," a correspondent writes, "we have heap of villages, the names of which have Lunja (a prostitute) as a prefix. I believe that, in old times, the Muhammadan chieftains used to pension off their ladies, when the bloom was off them, and grant them a village site. The Muhammadan rule was not popular in these parts, and the folk of the country-side may have been responsible for names of villages such as Lunjalūr (prostitute's village), Lunjapōyalūr (village of the prostitute's standard), or Lunjabunda (prostitute's rock or fort)."

Native names are often the despair of Europeans when rapidly calling them out at a Levée or University

convocation. The following are a few examples of tongue-twisters which, without rehearsal, it is difficult to produce *ore rotundo*: Bhogaraju Pattabhisitaramaiya; A. Minakshisundarasiva; Virupavajhula Mannarukrishnudu; N. Sarasvati Ardhanarisvara Aiyar; Tulisalama-dattil N. Appu Aiyar; Singanallur Narayanachari Vadi Rajachar.

Among the Baidyas (Billavas) of South Canara, the names of males are derived from the day of the week on which they were born, such as Chome from Somavara (Monday), Thukra from Shukravara (Friday), and Thaniya from Shanivara (Saturday).

The Koragas of South Canara were, it is said, originally sun-worshippers, and they are still called after the days of the week Aita, Toma, Angara, Gurva, Tanya, and Tukra.\* Writing concerning the Oriyas of Ganjam, Mr. S. P. Rice says † that “the lower classes of the Uriya people have a custom, from which De Foe has unconsciously borrowed. The names of Sombaria (Monday), Sukria (Friday), are not at all uncommon, and Sunday and Thursday have also been requisitioned. Why Saturday should not be used is not inexplicable, for, from the time of the earliest Arcadian mythology, Saturday has been a day of evil omen, and many a Hindu has as superstitious a dread of beginning an undertaking on Saturday as some of us have of going a journey on Friday. Among the Uriyas, the appellations

\* Ullal Raghavendra Rao, *Ind. Ant.*, III, 1874.

† Occasional essays on Native South Indian Life

derived from the attributes of the gods are many and various. Syama-sundara means of a beautiful bluish colour, and was an attribute of Krishna. Brundavano means a forest of the sacred tulasi plant. Dasarathi is a good instance of the purely Sanskrit character of these names. It is derived from Dasaratha (ten cars).” Mr. Rice tells us further that “many are to be met with in the zamindaris who boast of three or even four names. The additions are, for the most part, titles given by the various Zamindars, and they are often even more easily acquired than some knighthoods and many medals. A title, generally accompanied by more substantial recognition in the shape of land, is given for ‘blessing’ the Zamindar, for holding his umbrella, perhaps for handing him betel leaves. Thus titles, for the most part, denote some sort of compliment, such as Bhushano, an ornament; Ratno, a jewel; or Subuddhi, the wise.”

Among the Khoduras, who manufacture bangles and rings worn by lower class Oriyas, a quaint custom exists, by which honorific titles, such as Sēnāpati, Māhāpatro, etc., are sold by the panchayat (council) to any man of the caste who covets them, and the proceeds are sent to Pūri and Prataḥpur for the benefit of the temples.\*

“A Nayar,” Mr. Fawcett informs us, “addressing a Nambūtiri, must speak of himself as a foot-servant. If he mentions his rice, he must call it gritty rice. Rupees must be called his copper coins. He must call his house his dung-pit, and so on.”† A peculiarity with the

\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

† Madras Mus. Bull., III, 1, 1900.

Nambūtiris is that they do not generally call themselves by their proper name, but only by the names of their illams (houses).

“One feature in Telugu names,” Mr. A. Srinivasan writes, “is that they are sometimes not a safe index to the sex of the bearers. Males have names of the female deity, and, even where they bear those of the male deity, they often affix the termination amma. Thus Ankamma and Krishnamma come to be names of males, and illustrate the double source of confusion. Akasa Ramanna (Ramanna in the air, or man in the moon) is the usual subscription in anonymous petitions among the Telugus. Abrogation of one’s class or caste name involves no inconsiderable sacrifice of self-love. Thus the name of Chenchayya among Brāhmans; Yānādi and Yerukala among other high castes; Chenchus, Yānādis, and Yerukalas being the aborigines. Not less significant is the adoption by non-Brāhmans of the names Brāhmanayya, Brāhmanna, or in vulgar form Bapanaiyya and Bapanamma.”

Among the Nattamāns, the eldest son in each family has to be named after the village god, which gives its name to the kāni or sept to which the family belongs, and the child is usually taken to that village to be named.\* In like manner, the first male child of the Kotas of the Nīlgiris at Kotagiri is always called Komuttan after the tribal god Kāmatarāya, and the numerous Komuttans are distinguished by the prefix big, little, carpenter, etc. After a birth among the Kois of the Gódāvari district,

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\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

the child is well washed on the seventh day, and all the neighbours and near relations assemble together to name it. Having placed the child on a cot, they put a leaf of the mhowa tree (*Bassia latifolia*) in the child's hand, and pronounce some name which they think suitable for it. If the child cries, they take it as a sign that they must choose another name, and so they throw the leaf away, and substitute another leaf and another name, until the child shows its approbation by ceasing to cry. Any public-spirited person in the village or neighbourhood, who is honoured by having his name bestowed upon it, ever after regards the child with some amount of interest.\*

The Yerukala women are accustomed to honour their lords and masters with the dignified title of cocks.†

It has been noticed, at times of Census, that native Christians and Paraiyans, who masquerade in European clothes, return themselves as Eurasians, and it may be accepted that some benefit must be derived by the individual in return for the masking of his nationality. And it occasionally happens that pure-bred natives, with European name and costume, successfully pass themselves off as Eurasians, and are placed on a footing of equality with them in the matter of diet when they are in prison, being allowed the luxury of bread, butter, coffee, etc.‡

The ingenious suggestion has been made that, when native Christians pose as Eurasians, the name Murugan

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\* J. Cain, Ind. Ant., V, 1876.

† Ibid.

‡ Madras Census Report, 1901.

becomes Morgan, Ramaswāmi Ramsay, and Devadāsan Davidson. Equally ingenious is the suggestion that ancient Egyptian names have their Hindu counterparts Rhamessamena becoming Ramaswamy, Ramases Rāma, Chryses Krishna, and so forth.

Native Christians, especially on the west coast have Portuguese names such as Saldhana, Mascarenhas, Coelho, Sequeira, etc., derived from Portuguese sponsors when their ancestors were baptised after conversion. Others take the names of the priest who converts them to Christianity, *e.g.*, D'Monte, DeSouza, etc. A telegram which was recently transmitted in the South Canara district, "Albuquerque, taluk sheristadar, on leave, Vasco de Gama acting involved in the arrangement," takes one back several centuries in Indian History.

"At Sadras," Bartolomeo writes,\* "there is a Christian congregation. Most of the members are natural children of the Dutch and other Europeans. I baptised there some new born infants; and, I was inserting their names in the church register. I everywhere found in the book *Filbo de fulano*, *Filbo de fulano*. As I could not conceive it possible that a father should have so many children, I asked the sexton the meaning of the word *fulano*. He replied that it signified a person whose name was unknown, and that, when the father of a child could not be with certainty discovered, they put in the register *Filbo de fulano*."

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\* Voyage to the East Indies, 1800.

Among the Syrian Christians of the west coast, old and new testament names have become transformed as follows:—

Chacko; Yocob = Jacob.  
 Mani = Emanuel.  
 Yahan; Chona = John.  
 Thommen; Thommi; Thom = Thomas.  
 Chamuel = Samuel.  
 Cheriyān = Zachariah.  
 Mathan; Mathai; Mathoo = Mathew.  
 Chandi = Alexander.  
 Powlos = Paul.  
 Philippos = Philip.

Syrian Christians take the name of their father, their own name, and that of their residence. Whence names such as Edazayhikkal Mathoo Philip, or Kunnampuram Thommen Chandi result.

The honorific title Aiyar, which was formerly used exclusively as a title by Brāhmans, has now come to be used by every native clergyman working in the Church, and in the non-conformist mission of Southern India. The name which precedes the honorific title will enable us to discover whether the man is a Christian or Hindu. Thus, Yesudian Aiyar means the Aiyar who is the servant of Jesus.\*

It has been said that every man in France is now Monsieur, *i.e.*, my feudal lord; and every man in Germany Mein Herr; and every man in England Mr. *i.e.*, Master.† In like manner, the up-to-date Paraiyan butler of Europeans has the honorific title Avergal added as a suffix to his name on the envelopes of letters addressed to him.

\* Rev. A. Margoschis. Christianity and Caste, 1893.

† Baring Gould, Strange Survivals, 1895.

## COUVADE (HATCHING).

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THE couvade, or custom in accordance with which the father takes to bed, and is doctored when a baby is born, is very widespread, and is described\* by Sir John Lubbock (now Lord Avebury) in the sundry forms, which it assumes in Brazil, Borneo, Greenland, Spain, France, and other countries. To illustrate the quaint custom, an example from Guiana will suffice. "On the birth of a child, the ancient Indian etiquette requires the father to take to his hammock, where he remains some days as if he were sick, and receives the congratulations and condolence of his friends. An instance of this custom came under my own observation, where a man in robust health and excellent condition, without a single bodily ailment, was lying in his hammock in the most provoking manner, and carefully and respectfully attended by the women, while the mother of the new-born infant was cooking, none apparently regarding her."†

The couvade is referred to by Alberuni‡ (about A.D. 1030), who says that, when a child is born, people show particular attention to the man, not to the woman. There is a Tamil proverb that, if a Korati is brought to bed, her husband takes the prescribed stimulant; and examples of the couvade in Southern India have been already recorded. Thus, writing about the Yerukalas,

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\* Origin of Civilisation and Primitive Condition of Man.

† Brett. Indian Tribes of Guiana.

‡ India. Trübner. Oriental Series.



the Rev. J. Cain tells us \* that "directly the woman feels the birth pains, she informs her husband, who immediately takes some of her clothes, puts them on, places on his forehead the mark which the women usually place on theirs, retires into a dark room where there is only a very dim lamp, and lies down on the bed, covering himself up with a long cloth. When the child is born, it is washed and placed on the cot beside the father. Assafoetida, jaggery and other articles are then given, not to the mother, but to the father. He is not allowed to leave his bed, but has everything needful brought to him."

Among the Kuravars or basket-makers of Malabar, "as soon as the pains of delivery come upon a pregnant woman, she is taken to an outlying shed, and left alone to live or die as the event may turn out. No help is given to her for twenty-eight days. Even medicines are thrown to her from a distance; and the only assistance rendered is to place a jar of warm water close by her just before the child is born. Pollution from birth is held as worse than that from death. At the end of the twenty-eight days the hut in which she was confined is burnt down. The father, too, is polluted for fourteen days, and, at the end of that time, he is purified, not like other castes by the barber, but by holy water obtained from Brahmans at temples or elsewhere." Among various other classes, it is customary for the husband to remove the pollution caused by his wife's confinement by means of ceremonial ablution.

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\* Ind. Ant., III., 1874.

To Mr. G. Krishna Rao, Superintendent of Police in the Shimoga district of Mysore, I am indebted for the following note on the couvade as practised among the Koramas. "Mr. Rice, in the Mysore Gazetteer, says that among the Koravars it is said that, when a woman is confined, her husband takes medicine for her. At the instance of the British Resident I made enquiries, and learned that the Kukke (basket-making) Koramas, living at Gopala village near Shimoga, had this custom among them. The husband learns from his wife the probable time of her confinement, and keeps at home awaiting the delivery. As soon as she is confined, he goes to bed for three days, and takes medicine consisting of chicken and mutton broth spiced with ginger, pepper, onions, garlic, etc. He drinks arrack, and eats as good food as he can afford, while his wife is given boiled rice with a very small quantity of salt, for fear that a larger quantity may induce thirst. There is generally a Koramar midwife to help the wife, and the husband does nothing but eat, drink, and sleep. The clothes of the husband, the wife, and the midwife are given to a washerman to be washed on the fourth day, and the persons themselves have a wash. After this purification the family gives a dinner to the caste-people, which finishes the ceremonial connected with child-birth. One of the men examined by me, who was more intelligent than the rest, explained that the man's life was more valuable than that of the woman, and that the husband, being a more important factor in the birth of the child than the wife, deserves to be better looked after."

The following legend is current among the Koramas, to explain the practice of the couvade among them. One day a donkey, belonging to a Korama camp pitched outside a village, wandered into a Brāhman's field, and did considerable damage to the crop. The Brāhman was naturally angry, and ordered his coolies to pull down the hut of the owner of the donkey. The Korama, casting himself at the feet of the Brāhman, for want of a better excuse, said that he was not aware of what his animal was doing, as at the time he was taking medicine for his wife, and could not look after it. It is suggested, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, that the practice of the couvade has either long ceased to exist, or is a mere myth based upon a proverb evolved out of a Brāhman's gullibility in accepting the plea that a Korama was eating medicine because his wife was in childbed, as a conclusive proof of an alibi on his behalf.

It is noted by the Rev. S. Mateer \* that, after the confinement of a Paraiyan woman in Travancore, the husband is starved for seven days, eating no cooked rice or other food, only roots and fruits; and drinking only arrack or toddy.

Possibly, as suggested by Reclus, the following Toda custom, described by Marshall,† is a survival of the couvade. After the child is born, the mother is removed to a shed, which has been erected in some sequestered spot, in anticipation of the approaching event. There she remains till the next new moon, and, for a month after her return home, she appears to have the house to

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\* Journ. Roy. As. Soc. XVI.

† Phrenologist among the Todas, 1873.

herself, her husband remaining indebted to friends for shelter meanwhile.

The Nayādis of the Cochin State erect a special small hut, to which the woman retires when taken in labour. She is attended to by various female relations, and her husband all the while goes on shampooing his own abdomen, and praying to the mountain gods for the safe delivery of his wife. As soon as the child is born, he offers thanks to them for "having got the child out."\*

I have been unable to obtain any confirmation of the practice of the couvade as recorded by Professor Tylor.† "The account," he writes, "for which I have to thank Mr. F. M. Jennings, describes it as usual among natives of the higher castes about Madras, Seringapatam, and on the Malabar coast. It is stated that a man, at the birth of his first son or daughter by the chief wife, or for any son afterwards, will retire to bed for a lunar month, living principally on a rice diet, abstaining from exciting food, and from smoking. At the end of the month he bathes, puts on a fresh dress, and gives his friends a feast." The evidence on which this account was based was that of a nurse born of English parents in India.

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\* K. Anantha Krishna Iyer.

† Introduction to the Study of Man and Civilization.

## EARTH-EATING.

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THE practice of eating earth is widespread in many countries, and at Zanzibar there is a disease called *safura* induced thereby. It is on record that "the Bikanees of India eat a kind of unctuous clay, and Cutchee ladies are said to eat it, as in some other portions of the globe—Carinthia for example—the ladies eat arsenical earth, because they fancy it improves their complexions."\*

From Mr. T. H. Welchman I received a sample of clay, which is eaten by the coolies, chiefly females, on the Cochin hills. "They roast it," he writes, "and eat it in large quantities, about 1 or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. They seem to be ashamed of the habit, and, if other people see them eating it, try to hide it. After about twelve months they swell up, especially the face and abdomen, and refuse all other food, drinking only water. Eventually they die. I am told that, to stop the practice, the natives administer castor-oil to the earth-eaters, but this does not prevent them from eating more, if they can get the chance. I have known several cases of death from this cause." A correspondent writes as follows from Mysore. "The habit of earth-eating appears to be common with the women of this province, and the adjacent talūk of Kollegal, but only when they are in a certain stage of pregnancy. It is only a certain kind of clay that is

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\* A. H. Japp. *Indian Review*, April, 1901.

eaten, either raw or baked. The latter process is said to give it a peculiar smell or flavour. I saw large quantities of this baked clay sold in the bazārs of Nanjengōd, and made wide enquiries from women who were in the habit of eating this clay as to any ill effects from the habit, and was invariably informed that they experience none whatever." Another correspondent writes: "I have known numerous instances of Mysoreans, reputed to be addicted to earth-eating, and of both sexes, while the habit once contracted by women is rarely, if ever, abandoned by them, and is invariably followed by fatal results. It is usually an easy matter to identify a confirmed clay or earth-eater, as their appearance suggests that they are suffering from pernicious anæmia, the face being unnaturally swollen or puffed and the abdomen distended, while the limbs are shrunk except at the joints, which appear enlarged, and are said to be painful. The particular kind of munnu, or earth, for which such an unnatural craving is gratified, is apparently to be found in every part of the Wynād that I have seen or resided in." Mr. G. Romilly, who has a tea-estate near Meppādi, Wynād, informs me that he has had several deaths on the estate of dropsical women who were mud-eaters, and that he has been told there are others, who have taken to the habit because they have struck a singularly luscious stratum of mud. They begin by eating it in secret, and, having once contracted the habit, cannot leave off. Men very rarely eat it, and the jungle tribes hardly ever. It is almost entirely Canarese women and children, and Coimbatore Tamils who indulge.

In a paper read before the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1905), Messrs. D. Hooper and H. H. Mann state that "in Mysore and many of the districts in Madras the habit is common. In the bazaars of Madras and Bangalore specially prepared clay is sold for consumption. Lower classes of Tamils, and Badagas, chiefly women, eat earth on the Nilgiris. Muhammadans, or better class Tamils are not known to practise the custom. In Travancore and Cochin, earth-eaters are found largely among the imported labour on the tea estates. The coolies are Tamil-speaking people from Tinnevely, Trichinopoly, and Nagercoil. The Kānis or hill tribesmen have not been observed to eat earth, and the Malayālis or natives of Travancore only occasionally indulge. Women, girls, and even crawling children contract the habit. In one estate in Travancore, the Medical Officer reports that 75 per cent. of the women and children are earth-eaters, men, as a rule, are not known to indulge."

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## BOOMERANG.

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WRITING concerning this implement, Mr. Savile Kent states \* that "according to Mr. Balfour two forms of this weapon are peculiar to India. One of these, of a simple curved shape and made of wood, is possessed by the Koli tribes of Guzerat. A second Indian form belongs to the Maravars of Madura, and differs in shape from both the above and the Australian type. The contour of this Maravan boomerang is almost crescentic, perfectly flat, but much broader at the more remote or distal extremity of the instrument as held in the hand. The narrower proximal or handle end is, moreover, fashioned into the form of a conveniently prehensile knob, which is usually roughly carved. Although commonly made of wood, it is not unfrequently constructed of steel, or even of ivory. This description of boomerang has been proved by General Pitt Rivers to belong to the category of those weapons which will return to the thrower when dexterously manipulated. From the multiplicity of evidence recorded (ancient Egyptians, Africa, Arizona, New Mexico, and Etruscan vases) the boomerang must evidently be regarded as a weapon that did not originate adventitiously with the Australian aborigines, or at any rate upon Australian soil, but was in all probability brought there with the earliest immigrants from the Asiatic continent." The South Indian boomerangs,

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\* The Naturalist in Australia, 1897.



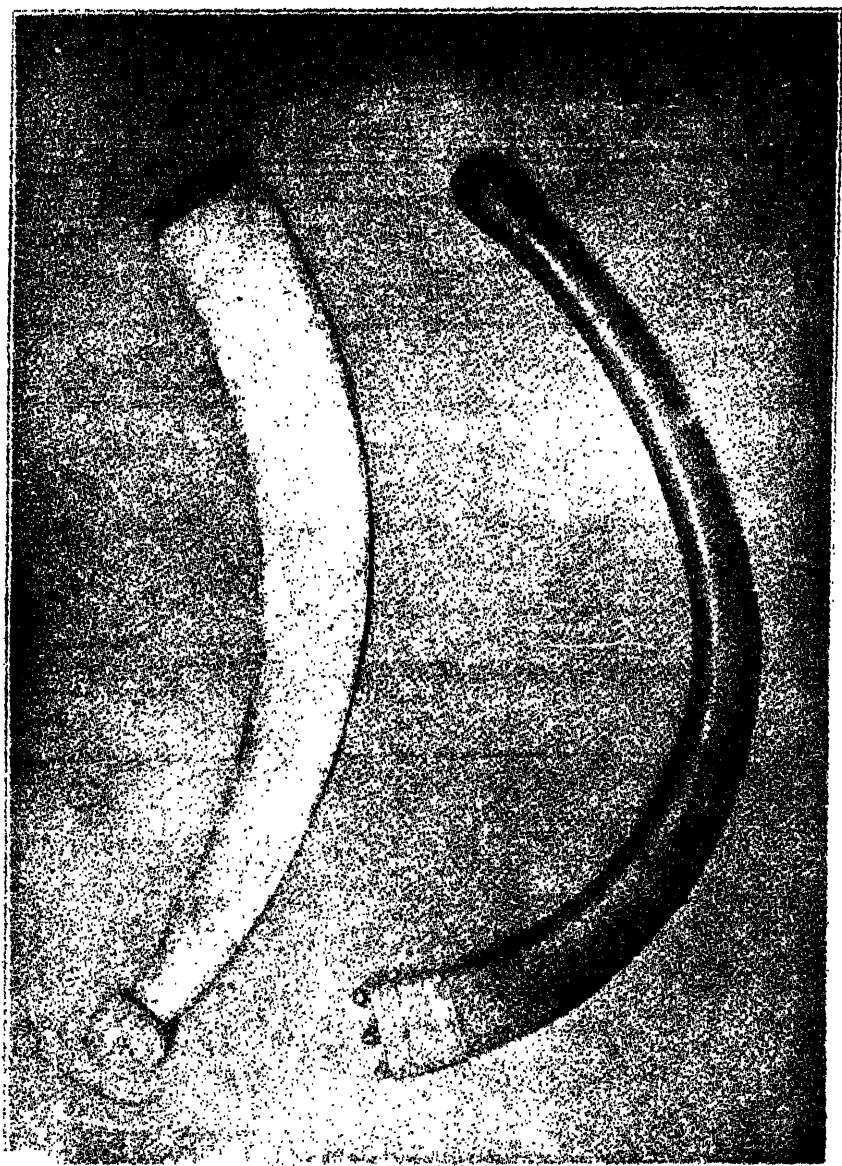
Professor E. C. Stirling informs me, "lack the blade-like flatness and the spiral twist, which are always characters of the true Australian returning boomerang. The majority of boomerangs in Australia are not intended to return, and indeed it is now difficult to get the returning form."

In Egerton's 'Indian and Oriental Armour' boomerangs (katariya) used by the Kōls of Guzerat for throwing at hares, wild boars, and other animals, are described and figured. "These" Colonel Lane Fox says "conform to the natural curvature of the wood like the Australia boomerang, which they resemble in form." The Guzerat boomerang figured by Egerton resembles in shape that which is used by the Kallans and Maravans of Southern India, which are described by him, under the name of katari, as used by robbers in Tinnevely.

"Boomerangs," Dr. G. Oppert writes,\* "are used by the Tamil Maravans and Kallans when hunting deer. The Madras Museum collection contains three (two ivory, one wooden) from the Tanjore armoury (plate XXXVII). In the arsenal of the Pudukottai Raja a stock of wooden boomerangs is always kept. Their name in Tamil is valai tadi (bent stick). When thrown, a whirling motion is imparted to the weapon, which causes it to return to the place from which it was thrown. The natives are well acquainted with this peculiar fact." The Dewān of Pudukkōtai writes to me as follows. "The valari (or valai tadi) is a short weapon, generally made of some hard-grained wood (vadathala, etc.). It is also sometimes

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\* Madras Journ. Lit. Science, Vol. XXV.



Boomerangs.



made of iron. It is crescent-shaped, one end being heavier than the other, and the outer edge is sharpened. Men trained in the use of the weapon hold it by the lighter end, whirl it a few times over their shoulders to give it impetus, and then hurl it with great force against the object aimed at. It is said that there were experts in the art of throwing the valari, who could at one stroke despatch small game, and even man. No such experts are now forthcoming in the State, though the instrument is reported to be occasionally employed in hunting hares, jungle fowl, etc. Its days, however, must be counted as past. Tradition states that the instrument played a considerable part in the Poligar wars of the last century. But it now reposes peacefully in the households of the descendants of the rude Kallan and Maravan warriors, who plied it with such deadly effect in the last century, preserved as a sacred relic of a chivalric past along with other old family weapons in their pūja room, brought out and scraped and cleaned on occasions like the Ayudha-pūja day (when worship is paid to weapons and implements of industry,) and restored to its place of rest immediately afterwards."

To Mr R. Bruce Foote I am indebted for the following note on the use of the boomerang in the Madura district. "A very favourite weapon of the Madura country is a kind of curved throwing-stick, having a general likeness to the boomerang of the Australian aborigines. I have in my collection two of these Maravar weapons obtained from near Sivaganga. The larger measures  $24\frac{1}{2}$ " along the outer curve, and the chord of the

arc  $17\frac{5}{8}$ ". At the handle end is a rather ovate knob  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " long and  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " in its maximum thickness. The thinnest and smallest part of the weapon is just beyond the knob, and measures  $1\frac{1}{8}$ " in diameter by  $1\frac{1}{8}$ " in width. From that point onwards its width increases very gradually to the distal end, where it measures  $2\frac{3}{8}$ " across, and is squarely truncated. The lateral diameter is greatest three or four inches before the truncated end, where it measures 1". My second specimen is a little smaller than the above, and is also rather less curved. Both are made of hard heavy wood, dark reddish brown in colour as seen through the varnish covering the surface. The wood is said to be tamarind root. The workmanship is rather rude. I had an opportunity of seeing these boomerangs in use near Sivaganga in March 1883. In the morning I came across many parties, small and large, of men and big boys who were out hare-hunting with few dogs. The parties straggled over the ground, which was sparsely covered with low scrub jungle. And, whenever an unlucky hare started out near enough to the hunters, it was greeted with a volley of boomerangs, so strongly and dexterously thrown that poor puss had little chance of escape. I saw several knocked out of time. On making enquiries as to these hunting parties, I was told that they were in observance of a semi-religious duty, in which every Maravar male, not unfitted by age or ill-health, is bound to participate on a particular day in the year. I had never before come across such shikar (hunting) parties armed with boomerangs. Nor have I ever seen these weapons used in other parts of the peninsula, though

I have, in various other places, come across small parties furnished with short, straight throwing-sticks used to drive hares into hedged avenues leading up to nets. Whether a dexterous Maravar thrower could make his weapon return to him I could not find out. Certainly in none of the throws observed by me was any tendency to a return perceptible. But for simple straight shots these boomerangs answer admirably."

The story goes that some Kallans, belonging to the Vella (Vala?) Nādu near Conjeeveram came down south with a number of dogs on a grand hunting expedition, armed with their peculiar weapons, pikes, bludgeons, and boomerangs. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of Mēlūr, whilst they were engaged in their sport, they observed a peacock showing fight to one of their dogs, and, thinking that the country must be a fortunate one, and favourable to bodily strength and courage, they determined to settle in it.\* At a Kallan marriage the bride and bridegroom go to the house of the latter, where boomerangs are exchanged and a feast is held.† This custom appears to be fast becoming a tradition. But there is a common saying still current "send the boomerang (valari or valai-tadi), and bring the bride."

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\* Madura Manual.

† G. F. D'Penha, Ind. Ant., XXV, 1896.

## STEEL-YARDS, CLEPSYDRAS, KNUCKLE- DUSTERS, COCK-SPURS, TALLIES, DRY CUPPING.

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THE tūkkukol (weighing rod) is used in the Madras bazārs for weighing small quantities of vegetables, tamarinds, salt-fish, cotton, etc., by shopkeepers, and by hawkers who carry their goods for sale from door to door. But it is rapidly being replaced by English scales. It is practically a rough form of the Danish steel-yard. The beam consists of a bar of hard wood, *e.g.*, rosewood (*Dalbergia latifolia*) or tamarind, 19" long, and tapering from  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 1" in diameter. The scale-pan is a shallow cane basket,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches across, suspended by four strings from a point near the thin end of the bar. The fulcrum is simply a loop of string, which can be slid along the bar. The graduations are rough notches cut in the bar and are not numbered, but, as there are only seven of them including the zero mark, they are probably well known to both purchaser and seller. The notches denote 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 and 40 palams, so that the machine can be used for weighing up to about 3 lb. (1 palam =  $1\frac{1}{4}$  oz.). It will be seen from the description that the machine is not a very accurate one, but it is doubtless accurate enough for the purposes for which it is used.

In Malabar there is used for weighing an instrument fashioned on the principle of the Danish steel-yard. The yard, which is made of a hard wood, is about 4 feet long,

and tapers from about  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch in the middle to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch at the ends. It is finished off at the heavy end with a loaded brass finial simply ornamented with concentric rings, and the hook end terminates in a piece of ornamental brass work, resembling the crook of a bishop's pastoral staff. The sliding fulcrum is simply a loop of coir (cocoanut fibre) string. The graduation marks, which are not numbered, are small brass pins let into the upper surface of the yard along the middle line, and flush with it. The principal graduations are each made of five pins disposed in the form of a small cross, and single pins serve for the intermediate graduations. Corresponding to each graduation mark on the upper surface of the yard there is a pair of brass pins on the middle line of each side, the pins of each pair being at a distance apart just sufficient to allow the string of the loop to lie between them. The object of these pins is to ensure that, when the instrument is in use, the loop may be accurately in a vertical plane through the graduation mark. The unit of weight employed is the palam of about 14 tolas, and the instrument is graduated from 1 to 100 palams (about 35 lb.). The last three graduations, representing 80, 90, and 100 palams, come upon the brass-work, and are marked by notches instead of pins. The graduation corresponding to 100 tolas has in addition a brass point about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch long, resembling the tongue of a small balance. The whole instrument is ornamental in design, and for a weighing machine of this class is fairly accurate, the sensibility being large on account of the considerable length of the yard. In a



more simple form of weighing beam, used by native physicians and druggists in Malabar, the bar is divided into *kazhinch*i (approximately *tolas*) and fractions thereof, and the pan is made of cocoanut shell.

For this account of weighing beams I am indebted to my friend Mr. E. W. Middlemast. The note may be supplemented by a quotation from 'Indo-Anglian Literature' which refers to an examination answer to the question, Graduate the Danish steel-yard. "This question is a downright violation of the laws of God, since we are not coolies neither petty shop-keepers that we will graduate a Danish steel-yard." Advantage was taken by the candidate of his high caste to cover his ignorance by assumed indignation.

*Clepsydras*.—The Madras museum possesses several specimens of a primitive form of horologe, or water-clock, which is thus referred to by Picart.\* "The inhabitants of Mogul," he writes, "measure time by a water-clock, which, however, is very different from our clepsydras or hour-glass. The clepsydra used by the inhabitants of Mogul is in their language called *gari* or *gadli*, and has not so much work in it, but then it requires more attendance, a man being oblig'd to watch it continually. 'Tis a bason fill'd with water, in which they put a little copper dish with a very small hole in its bottom. The water comes by insensible degrees into this dish, which when full, and that the water contained in it begins to mix itself with that in the bason, it then sinks to the

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\* Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the several Nations of the World, 1731.

bottom. The time which it takes up in filling is by them called a gari, which, according to the observation I have made, amounts to twenty-two minutes thirty seconds of time; so that, when the day is exactly twelve hours in length, each part contains eight garies, that is 180 minutes, or three hours. As the days shorten, there are less garies in each part of the day, and more in those of the night; for we are always to add to the one what we subtract from the other, because the night and day together must regularly consist of 64 garies, that is 1,440 minutes, or 24 hours. As soon as one gari is ended, the person who watches the clock strikes as many blows upon a copper table as there are garies passed; after which he strikes others to show the part, whether of the day or night."

In Nepāl the measurement of time is regulated in the same manner. Each time the vessel sinks, a gong is struck, in progressive numbers from dawn to noon. After noon, the first ghari struck indicates the number of gharis which remain of the day till sunset. Day is considered to begin when the tiles on a house can be counted, or when the hairs on the back of a man's hand can be discerned against the sky.\*

In Burma also a copper time-measurer, or nayi, was used. "As each nayi was measured off, a gong was beaten, and at every third hour the great drum-shaped gong was sounded from the pahōzin or timekeeper's tower within the inner precincts of the royal palace at

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\* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1884.

the eastern gate. From the pahō the beats were repeated on large bells by all the guards throughout the palace. To ensure attention to this matter in the olden days, the timekeeper could be carried off and sold in the public market, if he were negligent in the discharge of his duties, being then forced to pay a fine in the shape of ransom."\*

In his account of the operations of the Maratha army against Tipū Sultān, Moor informs us† that "the manner of measuring time in Chittledroog and other forts is somewhat curious. It may be called a hydrostatic measure, being a small cup with a hole in its bottom, floated in a vessel of water; and, when a certain quantity of water is received into the cup, from its gravity it sinks, and points out the expiration of a particular portion of time. The water being kept unruffled, this may perhaps be a very accurate method of measuring time, as it is evident no other nicety is required but exactness in the hole of the cup, which may be easily determined. At each gurry, or half hour, the cup sinks, and the sentinel who has charge of the time measurer strikes the number upon a gong, and, emptying the cup, immediately sets it afloat. At the p'hours, that is to say at three, six, nine, and twelve o'clock, he makes a clattering on the gong, and begins gurries again, similar to the bells on shipboard."

I gather from 'Asiatick Researches' (1798) that the hour-cup or kutoree was adjusted astronomically by an

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\* Burma under British Rule, and before. J. Nisbet, 1901.

† Narrative of Little's Detachment, 1794.

astrolabe, and that the cups were now and then "very scientifically marked in Sanscrit characters, and may have their uses for the more difficult and abstruse operations of the mathematician or astrologer. . . Six or eight people are required to attend the establishment of a ghuree, four through the day and as many at night, so that none but wealthy men or grandees can afford to support one; which is convenient enough for the other inhabitants, who would have nothing of this sort to consult, as (those being excepted which are attached to their armies), I imagine there are no other public (ghurees) clocks in all India."

This form of time-measurer, made of a half cocoanut or copper, is still in use among native physicians, astrol-ogers, and others in Malabar. A cup of this nature was employed in the Civil Court at Mangalore in 1852, a peon being posted in charge of it, and beating on a gong the number of gadis every time that it sank. At the present day it is used on the occasion of marriage among the higher Hindu castes. The Brāhman priest brings the cup, and places the bridegroom in charge of it. It is the duty of the latter to count the gadis until the time fixed for his entrance into the wedding-booth. The apparatus is nowadays often replaced by a clock or watch, but the officiating priest insists on producing the cup, as he receives his fee for so doing.

The method of computing time by means of a water-clock, on which the gadiya, or nazhigai (24 minutes) and jām or jāmam (7 gadiyas) are indicated by nicks on the inside of the cup, is still in vogue at the huzur

office and temple at Venkatagiri. The cup is in charge of a sepoy, who keeps the time, and makes it known to the public by beating a gong at the end of each gadiya or jām. To compensate for seasonal variations of day and night, correction is made in the length of the periods. The hole in the cup, after it has been in use for some time, becomes dilated, and to correct the error, it is contracted by beating the cup with a hammer. A standard cup is kept for the purpose of regulating the water-clock. The computation of time is reckoned by means of an hour-glass in some Brāhman (especially Mādhva) mutts. Mr. Percy Brown writes to me that Mr. J. L. Kipling introduced the water-clock for use by the Police at the Lahore Museum, as the clock was always getting out of order. The bowl is a copper one, floated in an earthen bowl, and takes an hour to sink. It is in charge of the policeman on duty, who strikes a gong each time that it sinks. Water-clocks are in use in many places in the Punjāb, and nearly always in connection with native sentry work.

Knuckle-dusters have for more than a century been used by a Telugu caste of professional wrestlers and gymnasts, called Jetti. The Jettis in Mysore are said to have been sometimes employed as executioners, and to have despatched their victim by a twist of the neck.\* Thus, in the last campaign against Tipū Sultān, General Matthews had his head wrung from his body by the “tiger fangs of the Jetties, a set of

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\* Rice, Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer.

slaves trained up to gratify their master with their infernal species of dexterity.”\* They are still considered skilful in setting dislocated joints. In a note regarding them in the last century, Wilks writes as follows.† “These persons constitute a distinct caste, trained from their infancy in daily exercises for the express purpose of exhibitions; and perhaps the whole world does not produce more perfect forms than those which are exhibited at these interesting, but cruel sports. The combatants, clad in a single garment of light orange-coloured drawers extending half way down the thigh, have their right arm furnished with a weapon, which, for want of a more appropriate term, who shall name a *cæstus*, although different from the Roman instruments of that name. It is composed of buffalo horn, fitted to the hand, and pointed with four knobs, resembling very sharp knuckles, and corresponding to their situation, with a fifth of greater prominence at the end nearest the little finger, and at right angles with the other four. This instrument, properly placed, would enable a man of ordinary strength to cleave open the head of his adversary at a blow; but, the fingers being introduced through the weapon, it is fastened across them at an equal distance between the first and second lower joints, in a situation, it will be observed, which does not admit of attempting a severe blow without the risk of dislocating the first joints of all the fingers. Thus armed, and adorned with garlands of flowers, the successive pairs of combatants, previously

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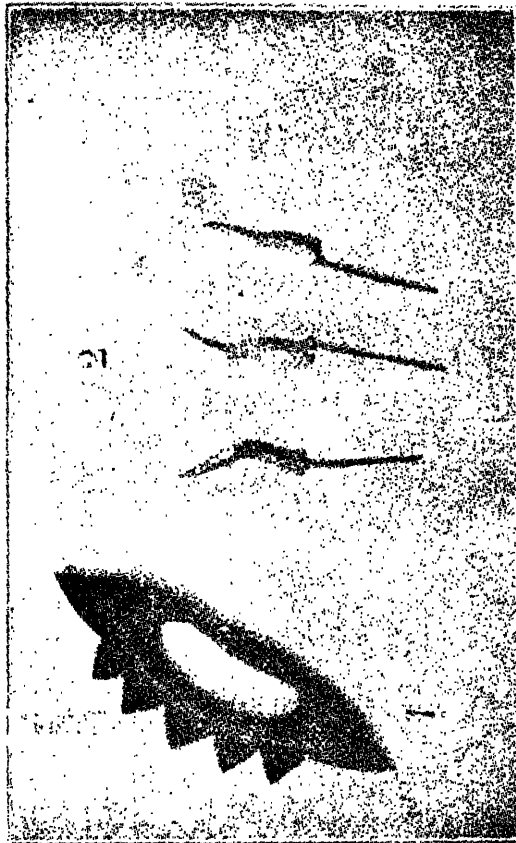
\* Narrative sketches of the conquest of Mysore, 1800.

† Historical Sketches, Mysore, 1810-17.

matched by the masters of the feast, are led in to the arena; their names and abodes are proclaimed; and, after making their prostrations first to the Rāja seated on his ivory throne, and then to the lattices behind which the ladies of the court are seated, they proceed to the combat, first divesting themselves of the garlands, and strewing the flowers gracefully over the arena. The combat is a mixture of wrestling and boxing, if the latter may be so named. The head is the exclusive object permitted to be struck. Before the end of the contest, both of the combatants may frequently be observed streaming with blood from the crown of the head down to the sand of the arena. When victory seems to have declared itself, or the contest is too severely maintained, the moderators in attendance on the Rāja make a signal for its cessation by throwing down turbans and robes, to be presented to the combatants. The victor frequently goes off the arena in four or five somersaults, to denote that he retires fresh from the contest. The Jettis are divided into five classes, and the ordinary prize of victory is promotion to a higher class. There are distinct rewards for the first class, and in their old age they are promoted to be masters of the feast."

The Jettis of Mysore still have in their possession knuckle-dusters of the type described above, (plate XXXVIII) and take part annually in matches during the Dasara festival. A Jeti police constable, whom I saw at Chennapatna, had wrestled at Baroda, and at the Court of Nepāl, and narrated to me with pride how a wrestler came from Madras to Bangalore, and challenged

Plate XXXVIII.



Knuckle-duster; Cock-spurs.





any one to a match. A Jetti engaged to meet him in two matches for five hundred rupees a match, and, after going in for a short course of training, walked round him in each encounter, and won the money easily. The knuckle-duster, as used at the present day, is strapped over the knuckles with string passed through holes bored through the horn. It is believed that if, in a bout, a man loses an eye, it is a bad omen for the Government of Mysore.

Cock fighting, though said to have been introduced by Themistocles, to encourage bravery among the people who witnessed the contests, is a disgusting spectacle, and I agree with Colonel Newcome that it should be performed in secret. At Chennapatna, in Mysore, a fight was organised for my edification by Muhammadans, who laughingly said that they take more trouble over rearing their game-cocks than over their children. Steel spurs are not used, but the natural spurs are sharpened with a knife, so that they are as sharp as steel. For the purpose of the friendly combat, without money on the result, which I witnessed, the spurs were protected by linen bandages. A real good fight between two well-matched birds may last for several hours, or the combat may be over in a very few minutes. The top of the head, a spot behind the eye, and the chin were pointed out to me as the most fatal places for a stroke of the spur. If the fight is protracted, water may be administered three times, when one of the combatants collapses on the ground with its beak in the earth, and its eyes closed. When the bird is knocked silly, and cannot come

up to the scratch, the fight is over. The seconds, between the rounds, bathe the bird's head and wounds with water, and pour water into the mouth, while rubbing the hand down the neck to assist the process of deglutition. The stray feathers collected in the beak are removed, and blood is extracted from the mouth with the fingers and a long feather picked up in the ring.

Cock-fighting is a very popular form of sport in South Canara among the Bants and other classes, and the birds are armed with cunningly devised steel spurs (plate XXXVIII) which constitute a battery of variously curved and sinuous weapons. The tail-feathers of a wounded bird are lifted up, and a palm fan waved to and fro over the cloacal orifice to revive it. The end of a fight at which I was present, recalled to mind Quiller-Couch's graphic description of a contest in 'The Ship of Stars.' "For a moment the birds seemed to touch, to touch, and no more—and for a moment only—but in that moment the stroke was given. The home champion fluttered down, stood on his legs for a moment, as if nothing had happened, then toppled and lay twitching." The edges of the ghastly wound inflicted by the spur are brought together with needle and thread, and the bird may live to fight another day. Cock fighting is said \* often to lead to gambling and quarrels, and is therefore actively discouraged by the police. It is, in consequence, generally managed unobtrusively.

*Tallies, etc.*—In the counting of areca-nuts, cocoanuts, etc., the tally is kept by making a score or notch on

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\* Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

various substances, such as a piece of bamboo, leaf-stalk or fruit-stalk of the cocoanut. In Malabar I saw a Paniyan elephant mahout, who jealously guarded a bit of bamboo stick with notches cut in it, each of which represented a day for which he had to receive wages. The stick in question had six notches, representing six days' wages, or two rupees four annas. Sometimes knots are made in a piece of thick string or cocoanut fibre. Among the Khonds, Mr. J. E. Friend Pereira informs us,\* "at the ceremonial for settling the preliminaries of marriage, a knotted string is put into the hands of the sēri dāh'pa gātāru (searchers for the bride), and a similar string is kept by the girl's people. The reckoning of the date of the betrothal ceremony is kept by undoing a knot in the string every morning. The Yānādis assist European sportsmen by marking down florikin, and those who are unable to count bring in a string with knots tied in it, to indicate the number of birds which they have marked."

In a note on an instrument used by Native mariners for finding their latitudinal position off the coast, Captain Congreve describes the following simple and ingenious instrument,† "A piece of thin board, oblong in shape, three inches long by one and a half wide, is furnished with a string suspended from its centre, eighteen inches long. A number of knots are made in this string, indicative of certain previously observed latitudes; in other words, coinciding with the positions of certain well-known

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\* Journ. As. Soc. Bengal, LXXI, 1902.

† Madras Journ. Lit. Science, XVI, 1850.

places on the coast. The position of these knots is obtained in the following manner. The observer elevates the board in his left hand, its longest side being upwards, and draws it backwards and forwards in front of his eye until its upright length exactly corresponds with, or covers the space included between the pole-star and the horizon. With his right hand he next catches hold of the string, and brings it to his nose. He makes a knot at the point where it touches that feature; and, if he at the time be abreast of Point Palmiras, an undeviating index is afforded, which will in future show him when he is off that point, the north star's elevation being always fixed, and therefore all the parts of the triangle formed by his line of sight, the string, and the distance between the polar star and the horizon, or the length of the board, equally as constant. To make the thing as clear as possible, suppose the observer finds, when out at sea, that the knot which measured the former coincidence of his position with Point Palmiras, again impinges on his nose, he is satisfied, on this occasion, he is in the same latitudinal line as he was on that, or that he is off Point Palmiras. He makes similar observations at, and the knot is fixed opposite each conspicuous place, on the length of the string, as far as Dondra head in Ceylon generally. Thus by a simple observation, at any future time the mariner is enabled to ascertain his position with sufficient accuracy for his purpose."

When weighing kopra (dried cocoanut kernels), it is customary to keep the tally by making holes in the kernel with the index needle of the weighing-beam. In

the measurement of paddy a handful is taken from each measure, and kept apart on a board.

An illiterate milkman, who supplies milk daily to a customer, puts a few drops of milk on the cow-dung smeared floor, and, rubbing it in with the finger, makes therewith a dot on the wall. At the end of the month, the dots are counted, and the amount is settled. Dots are also made with charcoal, *chunām* (lime), or the juice of green leaves.

*Dry-cupping.*—A Dommara travelling medicine man, whom I interviewed at Coimbatore, was an expert at dry-cupping with a cow's horn. The apparatus consisted of the distal end of a cow's horn, with the tip removed, and surrounded by wax. Before the application of the horn to the skin of the patient, a hole is bored through the wax with a needle. The horn is then applied to the affected part. The air is exhausted from the horn by prolonged suction with the lips, and the hole in the wax stopped up. As the air is withdrawn from the cavity of the horn, the skin rises up within it. To remove the horn, it is only necessary to re-admit air by once more boring a hole through the wax. In cases of rheumatic pain in a joint, several horns are applied simultaneously.

The Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford possesses dry-cupping apparatus, made of cow-horn from Mirzapur in North India and from Natal, and of antelope (black-buck) horn from an unrecorded locality in India.



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